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THE DEPORTMENT OF A MARRIED LIFE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

DEPORTMENT

OF A

MARRIED LIFE:

LAID DOWN IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS,

WRITTEN BY THE

HONORABLE E----- S-----,

A FEW YEARS SINCE,

K. S-----, E-----, Honorable

TO A

YOUNG LADY, HER RELATION,

THEN LATELY MARRIED.

LONDON:

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THE

DEPORTMENT

OF A

MARRIED LIFE,

LETTER I.

Of the Diſpoſition of a Wife.

WHILE others are congratulating with you on your Happineſs, give me leave my deareſt ***, to be ſtudying the Means of its Continuance. I am indeed concerned in this: for as I love you tenderly, I ſhall have the greateſt Pleaſure in whatever makes

you Happy, and in the ſame Degree I ſhall feel with you any thing that may give you Pain. You are young, Child, and perhaps have little Knowledge concerning the Nature of that State into which you have entered.

I dare ſay you will not doubt the Sincerity of my Affection for you: A longer Experience in the World has given me Opportunities of remarking many Things that may not have fallen in the Way of your Obſervation. Accept then of the Fruits of that Experience, and remain convinced of the good Intent with which I offer it. While you allow me this Juſtice, you will pay a due regard to the Advice I ſhall give you, and I am ſure you will reap the Benefit.

To convince you of my Sincerity, I ſhall begin with great Plainneſs and Freedom. There is only one Path by which a married Woman can arrive at Happineſs, and this

is by conforming herſelf to the Sentiments of her Huſband. In order to do this, you muſt firſt know of what Kind they are, and how they naturally agree with your own Temper and Diſpoſition; for the more they do ſo, the greater is your proſpect of Felicity. In order to this, I would have you ſeriouſly conſider both yourſelf and him: And as we are all apt to deceive ourſelves in Things which regard our own Perſons, and our moſt near Concerns; give me leave to tell you what is my Opinion concerning both you and him; you may correct it from your own Examination.

You are both too young to have Experience; and, were there no other Reaſon, believe me, my Dear, this is ſufficient for your having recourſe to the Advice of your Friends: for no Underſtanding will avail without it. Thoſe who are your Inferiors in all reſpects beſide, from this ſingle Circumſtance of having ſeen more of the

World, will yet be able to inſtruct you; and I intreat you ever to hear and regard their Admonitions.

In regard to yourſelf, my Dear, I do not know that you have, at preſent, a Fault; but, without being very careful, you will ſoon acquire many.

You have a Natural Goodneſs of Diſpoſition, and Tenderneſs of Heart; you have a competent Underſtanding; and your Education has been the moſt careful. Theſe are Foundations for a happy married Life, becauſe they are the Qualifications which will give Pleaſure to your Huſband, and will create in him an Eſteem for you; but they are only the Foundation, and it is not impoſſible that a Structure very different from that which they would naturally belong to, may be raiſed upon them. Although you may have none of the Faults of your Sex, you are not without its Foibles; nor perhaps,

perhaps, let me ſpeak to you freely, my Dear, without its Follies. As you are agreeable in your Perſon, it is Natural you ſhould be praiſed, and you have Pleaſure in it; but take heed, how you indulge this Pleaſure. When a Woman is pleaſed with Flattery, ſhe is not diſpleaſed with the Flatterer. She may proceed from this to ſhew him Marks, though innocent, of her Favour; and be aſſured, that the Huſband, who ſees a Man complimenting his Wife, and that he is a Favourite with her, will be uneaſy. If he comes to an Explanation, there will be ſome diſquiet; for Suſpicion, however ſlight, on ſo nice a Point, will touch you nearly. If he be ſilent, he will continue to obſerve, and the jealous Eye ſees more than there is.

Your Civilities, although innocent, may be your ruin: Your Huſband will loſe his Peace; and, after that, yours will be of no long Continuance.

Your very Virtues, under your Inexperience, will lead you into Error, unleſs you will liſten to Cautions about the exerting them. Your natural Compaſſion will be ſoon diſcovered in your Family; nor will it be long kept within the Bounds of your own Walls. There are, in this Town, People enough ready to prey upon the Unwary of this Stamp; and, before you are ſenſible of the Danger, you will have run into Extremes, which will make you uneaſy if kept ſecret, and your Huſband diſatisfied when diſcloſed.

That you will be in the Danger of this Temptation is certain; but the Security againſt it is eaſy. Aſk his Advice before you do an Act of Bounty, and you will enjoy it doubly.

You are fond of Dreſs: I don't ſpeak this in Accuſation; moſt young Perſons are the ſame: And the more Agreeable, the greater

Pretence

Pretence they have for it. Your Taſte in this particular has been indulged to the Extent in the Preparations for your Marriage; but do not look on theſe as the Standard of your future Appearance.

Theſe are Times of Shew: Extravagance is a Cuſtom on the Occaſion. For the future, let your Huſband ſee what will become you before you diſcover that you have Occaſion for it. I am certain he will not be remiſs in this, and that will come with double Pleaſure from him as a Preſent, which you would have obtained by Requeſt. It is a dangerous Thing to confeſs to you; but I was the Occaſion that your Pin Money is ſo trifling. You may be diſpleaſed with me at preſent for this; but you will love me for it hereafter. I have ſeen many ſad Effects of the Independence of Wives; and I am ſure I have provided for your Happineſs not only in the obviating all theſe; but

in the giving to your Huſband ſo many Opportunities of obliging you.

I have been very free in declaring my Sentiments concerning you, my Dear; but it becomes my Friendſhip to you to be ſo. If I loved you leſs tenderly, I ſhould be more complaiſant. I have ſhewn you what are the Tendencies to Miſtakes in your Conduct; for at preſent they are no more than Tendencies, and you ſee how they are to be avoided. I ſhall ſpeak my Sentiments with the ſame Candor and the ſame Freedom of your Huſband: but, not to tire you, my Dear, that ſhall be in another Letter.

* * *

LETTER II.

Of the Diſpoſition of a Huſband.

I Have been very free, my Dear ***, in giving you a Picture of yourſelf; and you have owned that it is a juſt one. This aſ-

ſures

ſures me that you will regard my Cautions againſt giving way to thoſe Errors to which your Diſpoſition is moſt open. But it is of as much Importance to you to know your Huſband's real Character as your own, and I ſhall therefore declare my Thoughts on this as plainly.

In the firſt Place, I am glad that he is not vitiated by Travel: The Faults and the Foibles of our own Growth are leſs, and they are more eaſily conquered than thoſe which young Men import from other nations. If he have ſome of the Errors which are the Product of a *Britiſh* Education, he has, in return, all the *Britiſh* Virtues. You know that Good-nature is the peculiar Character of our Nation: and indeed (for I ſhall uſe no Flattery here) I do not know any Man in whom it is more eminent. His Perſon is what you have declared to me you liked; let no Inconſtancy of Mind alter your Thoughts on that Head; for your continuing to love him

him will not only be itſelf a Virtue, but the occaſion of many others. You have often told me, that you thought him the compleateſt Man, and the fineſt Gentleman of his Age; let no Flight of Fancy rob him of that Preference. A little Love added to his real Advantages, might well make you believe ſo. If ever you think, or but incline to think otherwiſe, remember you are in Danger of leſſening that Affection which ought to increaſe after your Marriage: And remember, that, without that Affection, there can be no Happineſs. Check the dangerous Thought in Time. Remember the Hours in which you doated on him; and let his great Eſteem and Love for you (for he has ſhewn both in Marrying you) not only revive, but improve and increaſe that honeſt Affection, that virtuous Partiality.—His Temper—if I may judge from the great deal I have ſeen of a Man whom I believe to be above Diſguiſe, is ſweet and indulgent; and his Underſtanding of the

higher

higher Claſs. Let not my ſeeming to think that he does not appear in the higheſt of all Lights on this Account, make you e'er the leſs eſteem him. The Man of but a common Underſtanding, and he is much more than this, is greatly ſuperior to the unexperienced of our Sex, and will always be able to adviſe them. Let him ſtand in this regard with you. I would place him juſt where he ought to be in your Eſteem, becauſe much of his Happineſs, as well as yours—depends upon your judging rightly of him in this Particular. I would have you conſider him much better qualified to judge of Perſons and of Things than you are; but I would not have you receive his Opinions as beyond Exception. In Trifles you will do well to think ſo of them; nay, if you think otherwiſe, it will be prudent in you to obey them: But, when they concern Things of Conſequence, I would have you mention the whole in Private to ſome diſcreet and faithful Friend. This my deareſt ***, is a

point

point of the moſt tender Nature for me to touch upon; but my true Regard for you would not permit me to be ſilent. It is more Tender yet for you to regulate; but too much depends upon it, to ſuffer me to leave it unnoticed. I have gone through it with a trembling, but a determined, Hand; and, when I review what I have Written, I do intreat you to pay the ſtricteſt regard to it.

In Sincerity, I look upon the Diſpoſition of your Huſband, to be like your own, rather open to Foibles than to Faults. At leaſt in him they are no more; for, my Dear, what in Women are Crimes; Cuſtom, however unjuſtly, has made in Man but Follies. I do not approve of this Diſtinction, nor will you; but it is eſtabliſhed, and you muſt act as if you approved it.

When I mention thoſe things which among Men are called Follies, I underſtand the Love of Drinking to be one. Of this

your

your Huſband is not ſtrictly to be accuſed, for I believe he does not love Wine; but his Good-nature leads him into an Error very nearly approaching to it: He drinks becauſe others love it. It is the fooliſh Faſhion of the Time: A Pride in pouring down large Draughts of intoxicating Liquor is removed from the Reſorts of the Mean and Vulgar, whom it may be ſaid to become, to thoſe of the Polite; and, even in private Families, it is as frequent as at public Meetings.

I have diſtinguiſhed between the Man who drinks from Choice, and him who does not approve, but barely complies with it, to ſhew you what is the true Character of your Huſband in this particular; the one is a Sot, and never to be reclaimed; the other, though he cannot be called off at once, or perhaps ever perfectly from it; yet will be led to diſguſt it more and more, and finally perhaps to diſregard it.

This is a Diſtinction that concerns you nearly. You may, by Gentleneſs, and by ſoft Perſuaſion, prevent at leaſt his ever coming to think it a Pleaſure; and there may be yet more in your Power. All, however, that you can effect in it is of the greateſt Importance, and this ſlight Advantage is worth all the Trouble you can beſtow to gain it.

There is a Secret of more uſe by far than Perſuaſion in this Cauſe. Make your own Company agreeable to him by every Art and every Indulgence, and you will Wean him from a Cuſtom which he ſees gives you Pain, and which robs him of ſo much of you. But all this muſt be the Effect of Good Humour. One reproach will deſtroy all that you have been labouring for Months; and throw him into the Fault too with new Extravagance. You may rejoice when he avoids a Party of this kind openly; but it muſt be by Accident only that he diſcovers your Uneaſineſs.

There

There is more, my Dear, in this than appears. It is not only that Drinking is in itſelf a fault, although Cuſtom has taken from it that Name among the Men; but it leads to many others. It is not only that it alienates the Mind, as well as eſtranges the Perſon, of your Huſband from you; but it may introduce the greateſt of all Faults, a Falſehood to your Bed. Many Men have fallen into this when under the Influence of Wine, who would have ſtarted at the Thought while their Reaſon held it's Place: And it is not only in Women that the firſt Folly of this kind leads to more.

It is the Light of that falſe Colouring which Cuſtom gives to Crimes, that even this Infidelity in Men is looked on as a trivial Offence; but ſuch it is conſidered, and there are few who will not promote it in a Mind that naturally abhors it. This is the Light in which Drinking, and thoſe who encourage it, will appear in the worſt Colours

to

to you; but they cannot be ſeen in worſe than becomes them. I have painted out the Danger to alarm you, not to render you Suſpicious. You will ſee the Neceſſity and the Advantage of weaning your Huſband as much as you can from this Weakneſs: And as he has no real propenſity to it, you will find that Taſk not over difficult. The Method is obvious: They err indeed who attempt it by railing at the Fault; but ſhe will find the Change wrought in ſome Degree daily, who finds the Method of making herſelf and her Houſe agreeable in a Degree ſuperior to that to which thoſe Scenes can pretend.

The greateſt of all Conqueſts are thoſe which are gained without Oppoſition, at leaſt without apparent Oppoſition. Uſe the Means without ſeeming to regard the End, that will follow: And as I have already mentioned to you in the Article of Cloaths, you will find it hold in all, that he will do, with

an

an infinitely better Grace, and greater Good-will, thoſe things which ſeem to himſelf his own Act, than what you viſibly obtain from him. Men have naturally great Obſtinacy; the beſt of them have ſome of it: They all have Pride too; and the beſt of them ſome times the moſt of it. They do not love to be forced, nor even to be perſuaded out of their Cuſtoms. They cannot bear to be led by a Woman to any Thing. They have a ſettled Opinion of us, as Inferior in Natural Authority and in Underſtanding; and it will have an Appearance of Meanneſs to themſelves, to be guided by thoſe whom they ſhould direct; or to be governed by thoſe whom they ſhould command. Endeavour not to get the better of this Opinion: I believe it is juſtly founded; but, if it was not, 'tis not your Buſineſs to reform the World; nor can it be your Intereſt to hazard your own Happineſs upon a dangerous Experiment. To be free on this Subject; as the preſent Buſineſs was to point out the real

Character and Temper of your Huſband, which, in ſome Particulars, your Inexperience might miſtake, I muſt mention to you that I think he has not the leaſt Pride of any Man in the World, and Obſtinacy always attends this in a proportionate Degree. I do not reflect on him in this; his Birth, his Rank, his Fortune, his Connections, all naturally produce the one; and that is as naturally the Parent of the other. But, my Dear ***, he has Good-nature in a much greater Degree than any other Quality; this would influence him to give into every Thing within the Bounds of Prudence, that you preſcribe, if it be without ſeeming to do ſo: And more than this, he doats upon you with a ſincere Affection: This will give you a greater Power; it will give you indeed all that you ought to wiſh, and will continue ſo long as you do not abuſe it: but the greater his Love, the leſs he will bear that.

I have laid down with great Freedom, you

ſee,

ſee, what I take to be your Failings, and what I take to be, not his Faults, but thoſe Faults into which there is Danger of his falling. I have told you the Method to prevent the greateſt, and to draw him off from the leſſer; and I have been at ſome Pains to lay down the Cautions that may prevent your running into Miſtakes, even while you think you are doing right. The Manner of going about a Thing is more than the Ability to do it. Under theſe Reſtraints, you will find it eaſy to effect that, which if haſtily and careleſsly attempted, even on a right Foundation, would have failed; or worſe, would have produced Conſequences juſt contrary to the Deſign.

Almoſt every Thing fails that is attempted raſhly and with Precipitation. Never complain of the Hours which he ſpends from you; for, being uneaſy at that, he will leave you the ſooner; and, expecting more of it at his Return, he will defer that Return the

longer. Never object to his Company; for he will then think his own Judgment queſtioned, and that he can only ſupport it by Oppoſition. Theſe Things of themſelves weary and nauſeate the Mind; nothing, except what is Innocent gives laſting Pleaſure. The firſt Hours of a Scene of Drink and Revelry, are joyous; but the laſt are tedious and painful. If you receive him tenderly when he returns from one of theſe Parties, his real Love to you will make him feel it in the moſt affecting Manner. He will compare the Pleaſure of thoſe Hours immediately after his return, with the Pain of thoſe which he paſſed juſt before it. He will not only reſolve to riſe ſooner from the Party at the next Meeting; but he will do ſo. From leaving the Bottle at the firſt Sign of Uneaſineſs, he will, on your continuing the Pleaſures of your Meeting, leave it before. He at firſt learned to go away from Pain, he will now go from the Proſpect of it. This will be an Effect, a certain Effect, of the

Difference

Difference he finds between the nauſeous Obſcenity and fatigued Spirits of his Companions, and your Tenderneſs and Affection: And what is this?—'Tis my Dear ***, what I told you would happen: The End is effected, while you ſeemed not to have it in view. He is no longer fond of Wine; he leaves the Glaſs when the moſt Sober do; and this being his own Act, not yours, will continue: and being at the ſame Time, the Effect not of your Remonſtrances, but of his own Conviction, he will never return to the Error.

Would you be more ſure of this, the Means to preſerve, are the ſame with thoſe which obtained the Benefit. Let that conſtant Attention, that accuſtomed Pleaſure at his Return, make known the real Joy you feel in it; and keep up his ſenſe of your Worth, and of the unworthineſs of his former Pleaſures: And, to add the finiſhing Touch to the complete Victory, do not ſeem

to know that you have won it. As you never let him diſcover, during the Attempt to wean him from theſe falſe Pleaſures, that you was attempting to draw him from them; ſo, now you have effected it, never let him diſcover that you once thought him addicted to them.

I am, &c.

* * *

LETTER III.

Concerning Viſitors of Ceremony.

YOU tell me you are pleaſed with my Advice, and that you ſee it is reaſonable: You give me, my Dear ***, the greateſt of Pleaſure. I knew you had Underſtanding to be convinced, and I know you have ſo much Sincerity, that I may believe you are truly ſo, when you ſay it. I pretend to no Advantage over you, but Experience. I tell you of Things which you would know yourſelf hereafter, but it might then be too late.

Uſe

Uſe my Obſervation with your own Goodneſs of Heart and Prudence, and you will be happy. If you regard me at all, Child, you muſt do it fully: The greateſt Events often depend upon the ſlighteſt Incidents; and there is many Times more in the Circumſtances than the Action. Take heed, that you not only do what I recommend to you; but that you do it in the Manner I recommend it. I believe you will: I take all your Aſſurances as moſt ſincere, and I ſhall go on with my uſual Freedom.

I have laid down the principal Cautions; I have painted out to you the general Rules for your Conduct; they are founded upon what is my Opinion of your own Temper and Diſpoſition, and on thoſe of your Huſband. Remember them; for they will therefore be of univerſal Uſe: they will direct you in a greater or leſs Degree in every other Occurrence. I beg of you, as you value your own Happineſs, to keep them always

in your Mind; and to refer every other Advice that it is poſſible for me to give you, to theſe; as alſo to examine every Thing you intend to do by them. What agrees with theſe will be always ſo far right, and what diſagrees will be almoſt univerſally wrong. Theſe are the great and general Cautions; the reſt, though leſs important, are to be regarded, and, though particular, muſt have your Attention. It would be doubly unhappy to fail in the leſſer Concerns, after you had been right in the greater; but this would certainly be the Caſe, if theſe were treated with Neglect or Careleſſneſs.

You will be viſited by Multitudes of Perſons on this Occaſion; many whom you have never ſeen before, and ſome whom you will never ſee again. The greateſt Part of theſe come as Spies upon your Conduct, and they have no other wiſh but to repreſent you to your Diſadvantage. A Bride is an Object of the common Obſervation: Every Company

is

is pleaſed with hearing ſome Account of her; and, as the World is always more fond of Satire than Praiſe, thoſe who mention you will be much pleaſed with Opportunities of doing it to your Diſcredit. A Bride is like a new made Miniſter of State; every trifling Part of her Conduct or Converſation is examined, and that I aſſure you not with the beſt natured Eyes.

I dare ſay, although your Inexperience might not have given you Opportunities of knowing this ungenerous Turn of the generality of our Sex, your own Prudence will direct you how to Act, now that you are inform'd of it. You will know that People who come to you Strangers, and go away ſuch, have no right to your Confidence. If you tell them your Opinion on the moſt indifferent Subject, they will ſtrain it to ſome meaning, from which they will ſurmiſe your future Conduct. You will know, that, before People who come to find fault, the

leſs

leſs you ſay, the leſs are their Opportunities of doing it. Theſe Viſits are only of Faſhion, and Faſhion may be kept up at the Expence of a very few Words. 'Tis always polite to hear, and you have thence the beſt of all excuſes to avoid talking. A Yes, or a No, are capable of very little Miſconſtruction; and if that be an Occaſion on which this is poſſible, 'tis always civil, as well as modeſt, to decline giving a poſitive Opinion.

I would have you treat all that pay you their Compliments on this Occaſion with perfect Reſpect; and all with the ſame Degree of it. You have other Hours for the real Converſation of your Friends. To be particular to them, is to neglect the reſt of the Company; and your Words will not be the leſs liable to Miſconſtruction, becauſe they are not addreſſed to thoſe who will make that Uſe of them.

A great part of this Ceremony will be over when the firſt Viſits are paid, for the reſt,

'tis

'tis eaſy, in this Town, for People to be very civil, and yet perfect Strangers; to viſit for Years, and yet never meet. Thoſe who compliment you on this Occaſion I would not have you think of entering into the Rank of your familiar Friends. Some may deſerve it; but it is difficult for you to know which. You are but young to diſtinguiſh; and ſhould you attempt it, the moſt deceitful would probably be thoſe whom you particulariſed for the beſt. I am no Friend, believe me, to that idle Cuſtom of viſiting People we never wiſh to meet, and taking Opportunities to do it at Times when we know they cannot be at Home; but, on this particular Occaſion, it may, I think, be right. You will owe Viſits to thoſe who have paid you the Compliment, and they will owe you returns to thoſe Viſits: Some of them will be ſo honeſt as to confeſs their Intentions in the firſt, by declining it. For the others, it is your Buſineſs to be very long between the Card, and the return of it:

and

and thus to ſhake off that by Degrees, which you have no Inclination to continue, and which you cannot ſo well drop at once.

I do not mean that I would have you make a point of being ſtrange to all theſe Perſons, in particular, for the reſt of your Life: I would only have you ſet them on a Footing with the reſt of the World of Strangers, among whom you may occaſionally make Acquaintances. In general they will claim ſome little Pre-eminence, as they are known to your own, or to your Huſband's Family; but this may be ſo ſlightly, and the Diſtinction is ſo little, that Prudence will pay no regard to it. This is the Conduct that I ſhould think adviſeable, my Dear, to your Viſitors of Form.

There is much more to be ſaid with regard to thoſe who have ſome Degree of Intimacy; but this muſt be the Subject of another Letter.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Concerning intimate Acquaintance.

ALTHOUGH it is long ſince I was a Bride, I can remember, my Dear ***, many Things in which I acted very wrongly at that Time; and having ſeen the ſame Miſtakes in very many ſince, I ſuppoſe them natural, and therefore, if not guarded againſt, univerſal. I have no reaſon to think you more likely to err, than others of your Sex; but, as you are liable to it as well as others; conſider the Occaſions and the Conſequences.

Be not in haſte to appear the Married Woman, nor think that a look of Care becomes you, or is the proper Mark of it. Care, my Dear, comes very near to ſorrow! at leaſt in the Marks by which, it ſhews itſelf upon the Countenance. I would not have you be ſorry that you are married, nor would I have you look as if you repented of it:

it: 'Tis doing Injuſtice to your Huſband, and it is calling for Compaſſion to yourſelf; and, if you have the Spirit of a true Woman, you will know that there is no Inſult ſo great as Pity.

Thus much regards yourſelf; but your Acquaintance are not quite unconcerned in it. They will be watchful upon your Conduct, though they will not underſtand Things too ſeverely; it is therefore prudent to beware even of theſe.

It is but a little while ago you was a wild giddy Girl at School: It will be expected that Marriage render you at leaſt ſomewhat ſoberer, and it is fit indeed it ſhould do ſo; but let it not have the Appearance of having made you more ſo than it really has. Whatever are the Effects, let them appear; make them neither greater nor leſs than they are, and ſhew them without Diſguiſe. Don't let it appear that you think your buſineſs to

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be Grave; but don't hide it, if you happen to be ſo: The Affectation will be the extreme, while the Reality will always be moderate.

Of all Things, my Dear, let your Conduct in this reſpect be equal. Thoſe who are familiar enough to ſee you in the ſame Hour without your Huſband and with him, let them not be able to ſay that his Preſence throws the leaſt reſtraint upon you. This is too common an Error. I very well remember that it was my own; but it is injurious to both your Reputations: It accuſes you of Diſſimulation, and him of want of Good Nature. Whatever is your Gaiety when he is abſent, do not give it up at his Entrance into the Company: He loves you for your Spirit, and he will be more pleaſed with it than with any forced reſerve that ſhall break in upon it.

The ſetting out right, even in Trifles is all; what you are at firſt you will continue:

And

And it is not only your own Peace, which is the greateſt of all Concerns, but the Opinion of your Intimates, and that is no little Matter, will depend upon it. One way or other their Sentiments will be communicated to the World; and they will preſage but ill of her Prudence, as well as Happineſs, who ſets out with Diſſimulation. You will think this a Trifle; but it is not one in it's Conſequence. I have known many a Marriage preſage unhappily; and, from the Opinion that it would be, I have known it declared that it was ſo; for the World is ready at Addition, from no more than ſuch a Circumſtance. It gives riſe to an Opinion that the Tempers are unlike, and that muſt be a ſource of Diſquiet. I do not ſay what might be neceſſary, my Dear, if you were married to an Old Man, or to one of a ſevere or moroſe Diſpoſition. I am not talking to all the World, but to you: You are married to a Young, a Good Natured, and a cheerful Perſon: He will like in you what

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he approves in himſelf; and you will give him an Uneaſineſs in affecting to become reſerved. I would have you, for your own Sake, avoid the leaſt Tincture of Diſſimulation: I know it is not naturally in your Temper; but you are young enough, to plant any thing there: And, believe me, the ſlighteſt ſtep makes way in a ſtrange Manner for the greateſt. You will have more Satisfaction in your own Mind from appearing always exactly what you are, and you will preſerve by it an Eſteem from your Acquaintance, which will as ſurely as their Suſpicions make it's way into the World.

It will be natural for you, beſide accidentally intruſting your more intimate Acquaintance with your Sentiments, to do it purpoſely; but, though it is natural, it is wrong. Avoid it, my Dear. The minuteſt Things that concern a Huſband and his Wife, may be ſwelled into Incidents of Conſequence.

Little Things may make the beſt Friends Enemies, and then the ſlighteſt Hint will ſerve as a Foundation for Volumes. I do not only guard you againſt giving Breath to the leaſt Suſpicion or Diſguſt with regard to your Huſband; I would preſcribe as ſtrict a Silence in regard to the Circumſtances of Joy. You can only be tempted to this by the aſking Advice; but few will be able, and yet fewer will be ingenuous enough to give it. If you want Counſel in any Point which I have omitted to name in theſe Letters, come to me. You will have a double Advantage in this: You will be ſure of honeſt Counſel, and you will be ſure that the Secret is not betrayed. I am not a Stranger to the thouſand Anxieties which attend a Match where there is real Affection: I am not ignorant that even the Satisfaction may be too great to be concealed: There are very few who are fit, or who are worthy to be entruſted with either. Your neareſt Relations, and thoſe of moſt Experience, are the moſt proper;

and

and Things which appear new to you, are to them ſo familiar, that they will give you quiet in a Moment.

There is another Particular with regard to your moſt intimate Acquaintance, concerning which I muſt not be ſilent; ſince I have ſeen the Peace of many Families, otherwiſe beyond the reach of Accidents, ſacrificed to it. If you have among them one which your Huſband treats with a particular regard, or one who is more than ordinarily attentive to him, find an Opportunity of dropping the Acquaintance on the firſt Diſcovery; ſo will you ſave the Peace of yourſelf, her, and your Huſband. Do not miſtake me ſo far, my Dear, as to ſuppoſe I am thinking any thing Criminal would be the probable Conſequence of this Particularity; but it is enough to you that it is poſſible you might ſuſpect, at ſome Time, and from ſome Circumſtance, that there was, or that there might be: This would immediately deſtroy both your Peace

and his. If you had taken up the Suſpicion ever ſo imprudently, you would find Occaſions of keeping it alive as effectually, although as unfair; and whether you concealed, or whether you diſcloſed it, the Event would be the ſame. If kept within your own Breaſt, it would prey upon your Peace; if diſcloſed, it would provoke your Huſband. If kept unknown to him, it would ſtill give a Tincture of Diſtruſt with regard to all that he ſhould ſay that appeared affectionate; and he who truly loved you, and who had a right to be believed in ſaying that he did ſo, could not bear that; ſo that the moſt prudent Conduct would ſtill leave it fatal. But if you ſhould, from any idle Circumſtance which your Jealouſy had wreſted into a Meaning that it did not deſerve, at any Time have plainly accuſed him with it, you forfeit all his regard from that Moment. Men but very ill bear the being ſuſpected, even when they are guilty; when innocent it is intolerable to them. They think there is a merit

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in Conſtancy, and as the World goes, it is ſo rare a Virtue, that, indeed, a Man may be allowed to take ſome Pride in it; at leaſt it is a Merit that you muſt be ſenſible it will be a pain to him to loſe undeſervedly.

Men bear Suſpicion, let me tell you again, but very ill, even when they are guilty; you may judge from this how they will bear it when they are innocent. A prudent Wife, even if ſhe found her Huſband falſe to her, would ſhut her Eyes to the Diſcovery, knowing that to reproach is but to harden him. Surely then you will ſee it as an Act of the greateſt Impropriety to be ſuſpicious without cauſe; and as this will naturally happen from an indulged Intimacy, ſuch as I have mentioned, although an innocent one, you will be convinced no Caution can be too great, nor any Time too early to take it up.

I have adviſed you to be very cautious of the firſt Diſpute, I muſt perſiſt in my earneſt

Admonition to you to be as careful to avoid the firſt Suſpicion. By the Occaſions which I have ſuppoſed the moſt probable to produce them, though on both Sides innocently, you will ſee that I look upon you both to be Perſons who truly love one another. This is the Cement of all Happineſs in the Married State; therefore preſerve it againſt all that are but poſſible Attempts. Every one is proud of being thought a good Huſband, becauſe it is the greateſt Character of a worthy Man. Almoſt every Man poſſeſſes it at firſt; and every reaſonable Man will take pains to preſerve it as long as he can. It is Deſpair, not Diſguſt, that makes ſo many affect to deſpiſe it. No one gives it up until he can preſerve it no longer; and then, becauſe he cannot poſſeſs it, he calls it by ill Names. When once the claim to this Title is given up, all the Good-natured Offices of the Huſband are thrown off with it; and he no longer attempts, or even wiſhes to pleaſe. You ſee, my Dear, how much depends

depends upon the keeping up this Character; while he poſſeſſes it, he will take ſome pains to deſerve it; when he has loſt the Name of it, he will abandon the Reality.

There is not leſs Danger, I ſay, from the firſt Suſpicion, than from the firſt Diſpute; nor is the one to be leſs dreaded by her who would live happily with her Huſband, than the other. Every Man is as fond of the Title of a faithful Huſband, as of that of a tender and affectionate one; and it is in this, as in the other, the difficulty of maintaining the Character that makes it ſo often be thrown up, and ſo affectedly ridiculed; but this difficulty ariſes from the conduct of the Wife, not of the Huſband; and therefore you ſhould look upon it as in your own Power to obviate and to prevent the Danger. While you eſteem him conſtant, it will be of little concern to him what the World ſuppoſes; but as ſoon as you ſuſpect that he is otherwiſe, he will be ſo. It has been

ſaid of Women, that unjuſt Suſpicions have rendered them bad, when they would otherwiſe have been innocent. I hope it is not ſo. But with the Men you may be aſſured the Obſervation has weight. She who ſuſpects that ſhe has a falſe Huſband, and owns that Suſpicion, will, in all human Probability, never have a true one.

There is ſome reſtraint upon the Man who enjoys the good Opinion of his Wife; and, to preſerve it, he will avoid not only real but apparent Occaſions of giving her Suſpicions; that is, he will avoid giving her the greateſt of all Pains, and running the greateſt of all Hazards of a Life of Wrangling. As ſoon as this is forfeited, he becomes careleſs, and gives her Suſpicion not only when there is, but when there is not cauſe. All he wiſhed to preſerve is loſt, and in vain is it for him ever to think he can recover it. I have known in the courſe of my Life, many a Huſband reclaimed by the Moderation

tion of a Wife; but I have known, too, very many rendered abandoned by her unguarded Violence of Temper. Many a one has relinquiſhed a real Intrigue, from his Wife's avoiding to diſcover it. Many a one has thrown himſelf into a real one, by her Suſpicion of ſuch as were only Imaginary.

I would fain ſet before you, Child, the real State of what is called Inconſtancy in Marriage, and Intrigue amongſt Perſons of Character; for it is very different from what is repreſented by ſome, and is imagined by others to be ſo. And I am afraid that not only the Peace of many Families, but the Virtue of ſome private Perſons is ſacrificed to the Error. People too readily fall into both the Suſpicion and the Practice of that which is repreſented to them as common; at the ſame Time that they would baniſh the Imagination from their Minds, and much more the Guilt from their Breaſts, if they were ſenſible that an ill Woman of any

Rank

Rank was, as ſhe really is, a Monſter. Malice, my Dear, is more common in the World than that which it repreſents: You have been told of the Wife of this Man, and the Daughter of another; of this Beauty, and that Coquette; of this Demure, and the other rattling Girl, having loſt their Reputations with this Captain, or that Rake. 'Tis indeed too true, that they have loſt their Reputations, and they have deſerved to loſe them by their Imprudence; and this perhaps is all they may have loſt. Their innocence, may have been preſerved notwithſtanding all the confident Reports which tell you to the contrary. You ſee how much they ſacrifice to their want of Diſcretion: nothing leſs than their Characters: and let this be a warning to you to avoid Occaſions, even the moſt remote ones of Scandal. Wherever Beauty is, there is Envy, and wherever there is Envy there will be Malice and Invention joined with it. You ſee what a Precipice the Indulgence of

Nature

Nature has ſet you upon; watch therefore your Steps accordingly. She who is innocent will indeed have the Peace of her own Mind left, to comfort her; but ſhe will forfeit a great deal who wants Diſcretion.

I mention this only to ſhew you what is the real Danger of giving Way to thoſe Giddineſſes of Temper that betray Women of Character to the Cenſures of the World: But as I told you, real Vice is leſs common, and, among the Multitudes who are ſuſpected, ſhe that truly deſerves the Suſpicion, is perhaps one in ten Thouſand.

The young Men before they think of Marrying fall into the Snares of thoſe artful Creatures whom you ſee at every public Place, and they find reaſon to repent their Folly. When they afterwards marry they ſee theſe Creatures in the hateful Light in which they ought to be viewed, not as Objects of deſire, but of diſguſt. The thought

of

of being out of the Way of their Allurements is one of the great Motives they find to marry; and they will never, unleſs provoked and urged to it by the Suſpicions, by the Diſregard, or by the Infidelity of a Wife, return to them.

As to the Women of Faſhion, or of Character, tho' Suſpicion may many ways reach them, actual Ill will ſcarce find any. It is impoſſible that a Woman educated in the principles of Modeſty and Virtue ſhould give them up with Eaſe: nay, even if ſhe no longer was kept from Ill by her reverence of Virtue, the fear of the Conſequences of Vice muſt deter her. Beſide, if all theſe Conſiderations were of no Weight, where are the Opportunities? 'Tis eaſy to imagine; but it might be difficult enough to find them. You may be aſſured, my Dear, that of the thouſand Reports you hear of this kind, hardly one is true; and that whenever ſuch a Fall from Virtue happens, it is ſoon diſcovered;

diſcovered : All Eyes are watchful, and Lovers are unwary. The Diſcovery is proclaimed, and you know the Conſequences. If you will conſider how ſeldom this really happens, in proportion to the number of the Reports you hear of it, you will join with me in believing how little Credit ought to be paid to ſuch Reports; and you will find how little Reaſon you will have ever to ſuſpect your Huſband; and what Improbability there is that the Women of Virtue and Character with whom you are acquainted ſhould give you that Occaſion.

You will thus be taught to do Juſtice to your Huſband, and to them, in caſe of any the moſt ſtrong Appearances, ſhould there be ſuch, of Suſpicion:—But there is alſo a Juſtice which you owe to yourſelf, which is to prevent the firſt Approaches of this Suſpicion. I can believe that your Prudence would be a great Safeguard to you after this Explanation; but Love has many Eyes, and

Fear

Fear ſhuts out Prudence. Although I have told you how impoſſible it is that any Perſon of Virtue ſhould give you cauſe of juſt Suſpicion; yet, when I recollect your fondneſs for your Huſband, I can ſee that many Things may give unjuſt Cauſe, and that will not give you leſs pain, or be productive of leſs fatal Conſequences. I did not tell you that you would have, or that you could have cauſe to think meanly of any who viſit you; but you may do it without cauſe; and as this would injure them as well as you, there is no care too great to be taken in order to avoid it.

It will very probably happen that ſome one of your Acquaintance will be the particular Favorite of your Huſband; not the moſt handſome of them, for that rarely happens, and will be leſs likely to happen in this caſe; becauſe, without Flattery, you will ſet them in an indifferent Light in this Reſpect. They are not always the beſt Faces that are the

the Favorites with Men who have no Deſign. There is an air of Freedom and good Humour which many have the Art to put on, that want the Charms of Perſon; and this always takes with the Men who mean no ill, beyond all other Allurements. I have known many a Party, among whom the leaſt agreeable has been the Favorite; and in all probability, if it ever happen that you are tempted to be uneaſy about the Civilities of your Huſband to any of your own Intimates, 'twill turn on ſuch a one as this. If this prove the Caſe, you will know, in the firſt Obſervation, what it is that you are, and what you are not, to ſuſpect; but you muſt, if you value your own Repoſe, my Dear, although you fear leſs, be not the leſs upon your Guard. It will be eaſy for you to find ſome Opportunity of dropping the Acquaintance at firſt, and the eaſier and leſs ſuſpectedly, becauſe the Intent of your doing it will be ſecret. By the Caution I have laid down, you will be the firſt Perſon who

ſhall

ſhall ſee it. You will be alarmed not only before your Huſband ſees, but before your Rival is conſcious that ſhe is preparing the Miſchief; and he will neither regret the Incident that breaks the Acquaintance, nor have the moſt remote gueſs at the cauſe.

'Tis thus, my Dear ***, a good and prudent Wife will always ſtudy to preſerve the Affection of her Huſband: 'Tis thus that ſhe will prevent the Occaſions of eſtranging it: She will obviate the Miſchiefs, that it would be in vain for her to labour to remedy, if they were once formed; and ſhe will prevent thoſe Ills, which it would be out of her power to remedy. Faults are ſtubborn Things; but, remember, Tendencies to Faults, are eaſily removed. Men are obſtinate when they are abſolutely engaged in any Courſe of Ill, or but of a Wrong kind; and they ſuppoſe it an Affront to their Underſtandings to be perſuaded out of it by a Woman: But they are eaſy while only in the

the Road to what is wrong; and altho' no Power could drag them from the certain ruin, when engaged in it, and the Event of one Attempt to do it would be fatal to your Peace, yet by Prudence and Good Humour, they may with eaſe be led out of the Road; and the very Intention, even if it ſhould not ſucceed, will be the Occaſion of no harm.

I have written you a very long Letter, my Dear, but 'tis on an important and an intereſting Subject: And as I know your own Underſtanding will be more powerful with you than my Influence, I direct my thoughts to the ſide of Reaſon, not to that of Authority. I would willingly convince you, for then I know I ſhall ſucceed: And by explaining to you, ſo far as my Experience has given me Opportunity, the Views and Motives of the ſeveral Perſons with whom your Concern will be, I rather wiſh to open your Eyes than to direct you;

and would have nothing appear as my Advice in this, that is not already your own.

I have often obſerved that the leaſt agreeable Women engroſſed the greater part of the Men's Attention and Regard: They throw themſelves into the Way of it, whilſt the Beauty is ſuppoſed out of Reach, and ſhe indeed places herſelf ſo, and loſes half her Conqueſts by a Reſerve; but thoſe who have leſs right to be admired, have more Ambition to it, and they cultivate the Occaſions which offer, as much as others neglect them. If I did not know you better than to ſuppoſe you needed the Caution, I ſhould warn you againſt Coldneſs and Indifference toward your Huſband: for this is the Fault that generally opens the Way to the Conqueſt made by a leſs amiable Object: But I know you love him, and that you ſee it as a Duty not only to do ſo, but to profeſs the doing it. Perſevere, my Dear, in that Reſolution; 'tis both

a Duty

a Duty and a Virtue, and it will bring you abundant Reward. This alone, will ſet you above all Occaſions of Jealouſy; and ſee that you are not Jealous without Occaſion. Indeed you are in Perſon upon an Equality, I think, with any Woman; and this Conduct, which, if you were not, would place you ſo, will, as you are, give you a certain Pre-eminence. Adieu,

Your's moſt affectionately,

***.

LETTER V.

Of the Continuance of Affection.

I Have begun my Advice to you, my Dear ***, with the ceremonial Part of a beginning married Life, and with the Obligations under which that will lay you, and the Dangers to which it will expoſe you. This was the proper Part of your Conduct to be

firſt conſidered, becauſe it would firſt offer itſelf to you in the acting: but theſe, although the moſt immediate, are not the greateſt Concerns. There are Duties that have no Dependence upon Faſhion, nor any Connection with the Cuſtoms of any particular Time. Theſe I ſhall ſpeak of one by one, and go through with you all the Stages of the Life on which you are entered, and point out to you all the Advantages that will attend a proper regard to them, and all the Danger that will ariſe from their neglect. Theſe things, Child, are unalterable, as the Differences between right and wrong, upon which they depend: And as no Time can alter, ſo can no Station of Life acquit you from the Attention that is due to them: theſe are calculated for the Advantage of the Great and Little; the Rich and Poor alike will Profit of them, or ſuffer for their Neglect; and all the Difference of Degrees with Relation to them is, that as the Wiſe will beſt ſee the Importance of their Obſervation,

vation, they will not fail to obſerve them, and be the moſt ſenſible of their Advantages.

Among the Duties between the Huſband and the Wife, the firſt is Affection. The preſerving this is the moſt eſſential of all concerns; for this being the Band of all the Union, on this depends the Happineſs that ſhall attend it; and that will not only be loſt by the Neglect of it; but it will be more and more complete, in proportion as the Attention to this concern is more and more inviolable.

I would not attempt ſo raſh a Thing as to preſcribe Law to thoſe who have it not already. There is no one, you well know, holds in ſo much contempt the general Opinion, that Perſons of good Tempers will love one another after they are married: tho' they were indifferent before. Altho' I am now paſt the Diſturbances of that Paſſion, I have a Re-

membrance of its Influence, ſufficient to aſſure me that it will never exiſt where it is not voluntary and natural. And it is for this Reaſon that I have differed with all our Family, and with all the Families of Prudence, as they call themſelves, in the World, about thoſe Marriages which are made by Parents, and in which thoſe who are moſt concerned have no Buſineſs but Compliance.

I do aſſure you that this Match of yours, advantageous to you, and honorable to us as it is, would have been very coolly looked upon by me, had it been propoſed to us before you heard of it; but your Huſband is of worthier Principles. He expected your Heart as the principal Part of his Agreement, and you gave it freely. I do not wonder at you, for he deſerved it. I know that he poſſeſſes it entirely; and, for your own ſake, as well as for his, I hope, and I believe, he will always poſſeſs it. I would not have adviſed you, my Dear, to begin to love your Huſband,

Huſband, or to try to love him; but I do recommend it to you moſt fervently, and moſt earneſtly to continue to do ſo, and not to let this be a Work of Chance, but of Conſideration.

You tell me, in the fulneſs of your Heart, that although you always loved him tenderly, he is now much dearer to you than before you was Married. I doubt it not, Child: 'tis natural it ſhould be ſo; and he deſerves it of you: Be careful, my Dear, that you continue to love him thus ſo long as he deſerves it. I have that Opinion of him, that in doing this, I dare ſay you will love him thus for ever: But then let it be from Reaſon; it is not to be expected to happen from Fancy only, or Accident. The Affection built on this Foundation a Breath will blow away: The Whiſper of ſome Enemy may undermine it; or the weak Suſpicion, falſe as it may be, of a buſy Friend, deſtroy it. Truſt not your Hap-

pineſs to ſo ſlight a Security; it is of too much Value. Hear me, with Moderation and with Patience. Although your Huſband does deſerve from you all that it is poſſible to think that Man can deſerve from Woman, yet ſome part at leaſt of your preſent Tranſport is to be attributed to Novelty. Take care that it is not too much. Diſtinguiſh what part of it is of that Origin; and be not too much given up to it. Things of little Value will charm us when they firſt preſent themſelves; but all their Grace wears off upon Acquaintance. There are undoubtedly ſome Allowances to be made for the Newneſs of your preſent Life, among the many that you owe to it's real Advantages. Diſtinguiſh theſe, and treat them as they are; as Flowers that charm the Senſes while they are freſh, but that will quickly loſe their Perfume and their Colour. You are pleaſed to have ſhook off the Yoke, light as it was, of Subjection to your Relations: You are charmed at being Miſtreſs of a Family;

Family: And as you owe theſe Things to your Huſband, it is therefore natural to be pleaſed with him while you remember, and while you feel them; but, my Dear, you would have owed theſe to any other Huſband: And there is enough in him you have married that is particular, for you to eſteem and to reſpect. Throw not therefore away your Attention upon Things that are common. You are pleaſed to have a right to the Affection of the Man whom you have choſen from all the World: This alſo you would have had, whoſoever had been your Huſband. Do not therefore let this come into the Articles of the Account of your Happineſs: It is not worthy. But remember that you have a Right to the Heart of a Man of Virtue and of Honour, who does, and who, will always love you; and you will then place the Advantage where you ought for your own Happineſs to place it, not on the State, but on the Perſon; not on the having a Huſband, but on the having this Huſband; and this is worthy Triumph.

You wiſh to preſerve that Happineſs which you enjoy. I have told you, that as the Foundation of it is the Affection of your Huſband, the preſerving that Paſſion will be the Means to perpetuate the Conſequences. To this your own Affection unalterably fix'd, and on all Occaſions ſhewn to him, will be the greateſt, and almoſt the only Step. Without this nothing can preſerve it: With it there is ſcarce any thing can ſhake it.

I know this is your Intent, and it will be the Natural Fruit of your Inclination; but let it alſo be the Fruit of your Judgment. It is an unforced, an unbias'd Affection that you have to him, therefore it is natural, and there can be no great Difficulty in the continuing it. You have engaged yourſelf by the moſt ſolemn Ties, that it ſhall be continued, and thence alſo it becomes a Duty. You have the Voice of Prudence to authoriſe it, you have the

Command

Command of God to enforce it. I produce not all theſe forms of Obſervation becauſe I fear that even the leaſt of them alone would be inſufficient at this Time to bind you: for you now are given up totally to your Affection: But remember there will come a Time, when that which now charms for it's Novelty will be familiar: When there may be Accidents to ſhake it, that now do not offer; and that it will then be a Time when it is leſs able to reſiſt them. Eſtabliſh it, my Dear, as it ought to be, now, and it will not be then overthrown. Remember that the Love which Marriage authoriſes, and which it ſhould inſpire, is no Flight of idle Fancy, wild, irregular, and uncertain: It muſt be firm, perfect, and inviolable: It muſt be the Fruit of Conſideration, as well as of Imagination; and it muſt be known as a Virtue as well as a Compliance. Convince yourſelf at this Time, my Dear, how cloſely and how firmly you are united. That you have

made

made yourſelves Poſſeſſors of one Fortune, and that you ought to have but one Inclination, and one Heart. Remember that it is not a cold Eſteem alone that your Huſband has a Right to expect from you: that he might have claimed, and that he might have enjoyed as a Friend or an Acquaintance: He has given you himſelf, his Fortune and his Love, and what is it that he aſks you in return? Yours. He requires no more of you, and that neither Gratitude nor Reaſon can with-hold from him. The Price he has paid is great; and he muſt have what he has purchaſed. The Manner in which he ſolicits it, were there no other Motive, deſerves to ſucceed, and he muſt not be diſappointed.

It is your Love that he expects, and he merits it. You tell me that he has it: Let him never doubt of this. It was your Duty, before you married, to be reſerved; but that Reſerve, which was then a Virtue, would

be

be now a Fault. There is a Merit in a well placed Affection, and there is Praiſe in that Openneſs of Mind which owns it. All that endearing Tenderneſs that your Heart feels toward him, let your Tongue be ready to expreſs. He is generous, he is grateful, and he loves you: You know what Tranſport ſuch a Man muſt feel from ſuch Acknowledgments; but you may be aſſured from me, that it will bind him to you for ever.

There is no Advice that I can give you, my Dear ***, but muſt be underſtood within it's proper Regulations. All you can beſtow upon him of this gentle, this elegant Affection, is not too much; but it muſt be only to his own Ear that you deliver it. While your Heart burns for him at every Moment, while you idolize him, while you doat upon him, preſerve the Modeſty of your Sex in Public; and let no one, no not your moſt intimate Acquaintance be in the

Secret

Secret of your Heart, otherwiſe than by your general Declarations. As nothing is ſo honourable to a Wife, as Fondneſs of her Huſband when alone, nothing is ſo unbecoming when there are Witneſſes to it: 'Tis an Offence againſt the Company, and may be ſuſpected by your Huſband, for you may have deſigns in it, and do it to obtain a Character, which to you may ſeem, altho' it's not ſo in reality, an amiable One. There is nothing which ought to ſet a Woman ſo low with her Huſband as this proſtituted Fondneſs; and there is nothing that will ſet her ſo low in the Eye of the World. That which is thus oſtentatious, may be affected; that which is ſecret muſt be real.

You are happy in having a Huſband not defficient in Underſtanding. This is one of thoſe Incidents in which you will have Proof of it. There are Men of that weak Turn, that they expect this avowed Tenderneſs of a Wife, and have a Pride in ſhewing others that

that a Woman of Virtue has a Fondneſs for them: But this is not your Caſe. He who is, and who I hope, and perſuade myſelf will be, always happy with you, thinks with greater Juſtice and Propriety. He knows this is a Circumſtance which concerns himſelf alone, and he will wiſh to poſſeſs the Senſe of it to himſelf.

'Tis happy that nothing is required of you, in order to pleaſe him, but what yourſelf would chuſe to do; but it is thus in all Things where people of Senſe and Virtue have to deal with one another.

I have entered at large into the Reaſon of this important Admonition, becauſe you wiſh to be convinced, I know not barely to be told what is right; and, being convinced, I know that you will be unſhaken in your Obſervance. In Public then be complaiſant, but be indifferent to your Huſband: In Company be civil, but not

not free. This will not only obtain you Reſpect from him, as well as from all that ſee you; but it will give a double Force to thoſe Endearments which you are ready, which you are eager to beſtow, when you are alone together. You are to know, Child, that Love, however the Notion may be exploded among the Weak and the unhappy People of the preſent Time, is yet the true, the laſting, and the only Source of Happineſs to the married. 'Tis ſaid that it will create Love in the Perſon to whom it is directed, even if he had nothing of it before; but this I doubt. I have my particular Thoughts concerning that Paſſion. But however this may be, it concerns not you. You do not want to create, but to preſerve Affection; and you will eaſily know that which could do the one will do the other.

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LETTER

LETTER VI.

On Weakneſſes of Temper.

ALTHOUGH I have recommended it to you, my Dear ***, to have the firſt and greateſt Care upon the Subject of that Affection which firſt united you and your worthy Huſband; I do not mean that this Conſideration ſhould ſwallow up all others. Though I have mentioned it to you as a firſt Care, I do not mean to place it as the only Object of your Attention.

This is indeed the Principal; but there are a thouſand others, and thoſe not leſs certain in their Effects, although thoſe Effects are of leſs immediate Importance. Take care in all Things; the Object of your concern deſerves that Care, and will repay it: But theſe in particular have this further Claim to your Notice, that without them the other cannot ſubſiſt. You will aſk what are they?

There are many, and you ſhall know them all. I only awake your Attention firſt, that you may not paſs them over with a careleſs Eye, or think them Trifles.

I have always ſpoken of your Huſband as a man of an excellent Temper; but I do not mean by this that he is perfect. No Man is ſo. All Tempers, and all Diſpoſitions have their Weakneſſes, nor is he without his. Perhaps I have not diſcovered what it is; perhaps there are ſeveral, and I have ſeen but one of them. You know him better. You will have Opportunities of ſtudying him more. Do it; for it is of Importance.

Obſerve from Time to Time what are the faults of your own Temper, and, while you are upon your Guard to correct theſe, ſee whether he alſo have the ſame. Regard the Faults of other Perſons' Tempers who are of his Age and Rank, conſider which of them are his. When you have diſcovered this,

this, do not look upon him the worſe for it. I tell you, you yourſelf, and I, and all People, are ſubject to them. I do not bid you enquire into them to leſſen your eſteem; but to guard your Peace.

There is one general Foible in all People of your Age and his. I think you are as little Subject to it as any Body that I know; and I am not upon my Knowledge, able to ſay that he has much of it; but yet it is univerſal: it is a Diſpoſition eaſily ruffled and diſconcerted. According to the Degree in which People poſſeſs this Weakneſs, they have the Title of being Paſſionate, or of being Peeviſh. Both theſe are Characters which I hope neither of you do, or ever will, poſſeſs; for they are very faulty. But ſomething approaching toward theſe; ſomething on the Foundation of which theſe Extremes are built, is natural to all young People, and is the unavoidable Fruit of Inexperience. If you find any Thing approach-

ing toward this in yourſelf, correct and get the better of it in Time; for there is nothing that will ſo certainly eſtrange and alienate the Affection of your Huſband from you. His Temper is not at all of leſs Conſequence to you than your own, and you muſt ſtudy it as carefully. If you ſee any Tendency to this in him, be careful on every Occaſion to attempt the weaning him from it. And do this not by Advice (for Men do not willingly receive that from Women) but by Example. Let him ſee, whenever you are tempted to be haſty, that you get the better of it, that it may not give him uneaſineſs; let him ſee how you do it; and on this Occaſion, though I do not think it adviſeable for you to be too free in praiſing yourſelf; yet, on this Occaſion, I would adviſe you to do it. He will ſee your Conduct is truly amiable; and that it is not only eaſy, but agreeable to follow the Example.

I do not preſcribe this as regarding your Conduct toward one another; for I ſhould

be very much concerned to hear that you had ever gone ſo far as to need an Apology, or even to need the Caution I have mentioned with regard to what has paſſed between yourſelves; but let your Family, your Friends, and your Acquaintance afford the Opportunities. Advice, even in this cautious Garb of Example, when it concerns yourſelves, is brought too home: And, while you may be in the Right in propoſing your own Conduct as a Pattern, there is ſome Degree of Superiority aſſumed, and ſome Degree of Reproach conveyed in the Example. Let him ſee your affable and prudent Behaviour toward others in Things which might have given Offence, or which might have occaſioned Diſguſt, and he will honour and eſteem you for it. He will know, by this, how very cautious you will be of taking Offence at any thing that might be made a Ground of it in him; and he will ſee the Conduct in ſo amiable a light, that he will in ſecret reſolve to imitate it. This is

all you have to wiſh:—Expect him not to make Profeſſions; it is beneath him to do ſo: and thoſe who do it, break them.

Here, my Deareſt ***, is before you the plain, the palpable, and the certain Way to prevent the leaſt approach to Diſſatisfactions between you; and 'tis impoſſible that you ſhould know how much depends upon your carefully purſuing it. Dread, as the ſevereſt Miſchief, the firſt Uneaſineſs that may happen between you and your Huſband; for it is ſuch. No matter how little it be; 'tis ſomething: And Things, when they have once got footing, eaſily increaſe. There is a Pride in never having diſagreed; preſerve and ſupport it. 'Twill be of all Guards the greateſt againſt falling into the Error.

You who have no Vices (for I am ſure you have none, nor do I think that he has any) can find no other way of diſpleaſing one another than by ſome little Difference of this kind.

kind. Pride is the Root of all this; get the better of that firſt: And dread, as well as hate Obſtinacy of Opinion in yourſelf, as much as you would dread it in him. Remember that in Trifles it matters not which is right, which wrong, if your Opinions differ; and it is only in Trifles that they can differ. Remember that it is worth while to give up a thouſand of theſe Miſtakes (for you may be ſure your Opinions will generally be Miſtakes when you differ from your Huſband) rather than to run the leaſt riſque of giving him Offence. By this cautious Conduct you will make him cautious; he will love you for the Care you ſhew to pleaſe him, and he will return it in an equal Care to give you Pleaſure. Suppoſe that you were in the Right; not that it is likely, but ſuppoſe it was ſo, it will never be pleaſing to him that you make him own it; and what is the Triumph, in proportion to the Satisfaction! Is it not better to be in the wrong, and to have him not diſpleaſed about it?

Theſe, Child, are the Rules by which you will avoid the making the leaſt Approaches toward a Diſagreement; and by which you will improve his Conduct as well as your own, and obviate all the probable Means that might lead to the leaſt Appearance of it on his Part. But though you will, by this, obviate all the probable, you will, neither by this, nor by any other Method, prevent all the poſſible Occaſions of ſuch Approaches toward it as may alarm you. Do not ſuppoſe by this, my Dear, that I reflect upon the Temper of your Huſband, as not ſo good as your own. I proteſt to you, that in this, as in all other Cautions, which regard Offence on his ſide, I ſpeak of Mankind in general when I mention him. You have no concerns, that are not alſo his; nor are there any Subjects of your Converſation in which he is not included. But 'tis not ſo on the other Part: He has a thouſand Things to regard, with which you have little or no Concern; and theſe, unknown to you,

you, may diſturb and ruffle his Temper. Accidents in his Affairs, or a thouſand other Occurences, which his very Love for you will make him keep from your Knowledge, may diſorder him; and when his Mind is diſcompoſed by theſe, or when much employed upon them, his Inattention, or his diſregard to what is ſaid on ſome trifling Occaſion, may amount even to Peeviſhneſs.

Here, my Dear ***, is a new Scene in which you are to act; and it will require all the Addreſs and all the Compoſure which are within the command of your Temper, and of your Underſtanding. I have hitherto mentioned theſe little Differences and Diſſatisfactions as what you were to foreſee, and being acquainted with what are their general Occaſions, to prevent. You now ſee them in the light of preſent and begun; no matter how very little they are, no matter how trivial the Beginning. Any Diſtaſte, any Beginning is too much, and according to your

own

own Management, for now it lies wholly with you, will become a Thing of the greateſt Importance, or it will ſhrink to nothing. He who is pettiſh at a Trifle, becauſe his Mind is diſcompoſed, will, for the ſame Reaſon, be exceptious at the leaſt Notice of it. He is uneaſy, and therefore he feels what is not, will he not therefore be alarmed at any Thing that is?

When you find your Huſband, my Dear, at any Time diſcompoſed, attribute it not to yourſelf, or your own Conduct; for I know that will never be the Occaſion, ſince it will not give him any: Underſtand it as the Effect of ſome croſs Accident, which his Affection, that he may not give you Pain, keeps from your Knowledge. Thus will your own conſcious Innocence give him no room for Suſpicion. If it be poſſible, let him not ſee that you diſcover this: But remember what it is, and what is the Occaſion, and you will think how much you owe to him who will

not

not make you Partner in his Uneaſineſſes, and in what Manner you ought to behave to him whoſe Diſquiet carries ſuch claim to your Concern.

If in general you ſee him only deep in Thought, underſtand this as the Occaſion: And if at any Time a peeviſh Word drop from him, aſſure yourſelf this is it's Origin. Enquire not why he ſpeaks ſo; do not ſeem to know that he does; but in your own Behaviour do every Thing to ſooth and to compoſe his Temper. I have convinced you that he deſerves this from you, and it will ſucceed. He will ſee your Tenderneſs and Affection a Balm for every Wound of adverſe Fortune; your Love a Compenſation for every unlucky Incident that may occur to him.

It is a Cuſtom, by much too general with Wives, when the Man they love, or but pretend to love, appears uneaſy, to ſpeak of it,

it, to preſs to know the Reaſon, and to ſolicit every Article of an Explanation; but however univerſal this, it's wrong: Nothing can be more ſo. If the cauſe of his Silence proceeds from the generous Principle I have told you, he will be made more uneaſy by the Solicitation, and 'tis a Pain that ought not to be given him: If otherwiſe, he has his Reaſons for his Silence; or be it but his Fancy, 'tis no Crime. He has a right to what Conduct pleaſes him, and it will make him Peeviſh to oppoſe it. The ſame Cautions, and from the ſame Reaſons, plead againſt the urging an Explanation of any pettiſh Word that may by chance eſcape him. Do not deceive yourſelf ſo far, my Dear, as to ſuppoſe it is always Affection which dictates this idle and ungrateful Importunity: Even if it were from Affection, 'tis an ill Fruit of it; but, in general, 'tis merely Curioſity. This is too prevalent in us all by Nature; but 'tis a ſource of univerſal Evil. Beware of it in every Thing, my

Dear,

Dear, but in nothing more attentively than in this.

The Writers on Morality have ſaid, in their Cautions againſt this Source of Diſquiet in the Married Life, that the Huſband and Wife ſhould never be both angry together; that when one is out of Temper, the other ſhould be ſilent. But this is talking in the general: 'Tis right, 'tis wiſe, and it was perhaps as much as a Recluſe lockt up in his Study could arrive to know; but thoſe who live among the World are acquainted with a thouſand Delicacies unknown to thoſe remote Obſervers. There is a Manner in doing Things, in which as much conſiſts, as in the very doing them. And 'tis not ſufficient that People are told what they are to do, unleſs they are informed withal in what way they are to do it. I have added what muſt be Practice to their Speculation; and I have pointed out to you every Step toward Uneaſineſs, and every Step toward preventing it.

Obſerve

Obſerve them, my dear Child; and you will owe to it more than you at preſent can ſuppoſe. I ſpeak from Experience, and I would make the Fruit of that Experience yours.

You have heard that *Virtue is it's own Reward,* and there is a great deal of Truth in the Sentence; but Virtue and every Step I have been preſcribing to you, is Virtue in a certain Degree; is not only a Reward unto itſelf, but it brings many Rewards with it. It is a ſufficient Satisfaction to good Perſons to know that they have done their Duty, and that will be your Satisfaction in conſequence of a Conduct of this kind. But this is not all: you will not only have obtained, by this, your own Approbation, but the Eſteem of your Huſband. Although you mean no ſhow of the Goodneſs of your Behaviour, he will ſee it. Although you make no boaſt of your Concern, or your Affection, he will diſcover it all: and he will

be

be the more ſatisfied of it, becauſe he has diſcovered it. That which is boaſted may be affected, or pretended; ſilent Virtue is always real. He will not only eſteem you for this, but he will Love you the more. Perhaps, in the fulneſs of his Heart, he will tell you that he ſaw it; that he was wrong, and that he reverences you for the Behaviour that bore with his Faults, and that reclaimed him. You will indeed have Reaſon to rejoice; nay, it is juſt and reaſonable to Triumph in this; but it ſhould be in ſecret; for there is no Anſwer fit for you to make on ſuch an Occaſion. You muſt be ſilent.

* * *.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

On Diſputes upon trivial Occaſions.

I Have ſaid to you, dear Child, all that my Heart could dictate, and all that my Experience was able to inform me on the Subject of thoſe weakneſſes of Temper, which even the beſt are liable to, and which therefore you muſt expect to find in the Perſon with whom you are to ſpend your Life. If I have ſeemed to make little Things too Important in this Conſideration, it is my Dear, nothing more than my Care for you, that has enlarged them; but be aſſured that all this Increaſe is owing only to this, that, conſidering in what Manner they might affect your Youth and Inexperience, I have ſeen them not only in their preſent Form, but in their Conſequences. This is a way thoſe who are acquainted with the World have of judging, and you will one Time fall into it. If I have cautioned you againſt the

the Cauſes and Springs of thoſe Diſagreements which render the Lives of ſo many married Perſons unhappy, with an Earneſtneſs more than proportioned to the Things themſelves; ſurely it has been not at all too great for the guarding you againſt thoſe Diſagreements. Keep, I intreat you, all thoſe Admonitions in your Mind, and you will avoid a thouſand Diſputes into which others would have fallen. But though I am aſſured you will, by this Means, eſcape ſo many Dangers, I do not ſuppoſe it a certainty that you will be free from all. I look upon Human Nature, under the ſtricteſt Regulations, as too imperfect to admit of Security; and I think it poſſible, although I hope it is unlikely, that, after all this Care, you may be unhappy enough to fall into ſome little idle Miſunderſtanding. I ſhall think myſelf to have performed but half my Charge, if I leave you at a loſs how to heal the Breach, which I had taken ſo much Pains to tell you how to avoid.

As I am confident neither of you will do any Thing ill, I take it as a certainty, that if ever any Diſpute or Diſagreement ariſe between you, it will be about a Trifle. A thouſand Things may happen to occaſion a Diſſatisfaction of this kind; but there is only one that can foment or can preſerve it, this is Obſtinacy. I know, my Dear, how much of this there is in Human Nature; I know how much of it there is in my own Sex; and therefore 'tis impoſſible to give too much Caution againſt it. If ever an angry Word ſhould have been returned, I entreat you, for every Thing depends upon it, to conſider what it is you are going to ſay, before you ſpeak the third.

Yours, is that Time at which Inſtruction is not thrown away: 'Tis juſt at the Period in which you now are, that it can be of uſe. 'Tis impoſſible often, to reconcile thoſe whoſe Happineſs depends upon the Reconciliation; and this alſo is a Fruit of Obſtinacy.

It

It is impoſſible, I ſay, to be done, it is therefore idle to attempt it: But 'tis eaſy, at leaſt I hope ſo, with Minds like yours, to prevent it, and therefore I take upon me to adviſe you. The Matter is of ſo much Importance, that I cannot be too punctual in doing it. 'Tis for this Reaſon that I enter ſo minutely into every Circumſtance; and that I ſo often break from the Thread of my Advice upon particular Heads, for general Cautions. Perhaps I am tedious; but, my Dear, pray forgive me. I think it not too much Labour to write, do not you think it much to read it.

But I ſhall return to my Advice. I have obſerved it muſt be about ſome Trifle that you diſpute with your Huſband, if ever you diſpute with him, and remember what it is that this Trifle may coſt you; his good-Will and your Peace for Life. Is it worth while, my Dear, to run the Venture? To be ſure it is not. Give it up at once, what-

ſoever it be, and avoid a Danger that is ſo diſproportioned. This will make an Advantage even out of the Thing that threatened you; for he will know that he was in the Wrong much ſooner from your ſubmitting, than from your defending the Point, becauſe he will be ſooner cool; and, when he does ſo, he will love you the more. Whether he ſuppoſe that a Diffidence of your own Opinion, when oppoſed to his, would not let you find that he was ſo; or, whether, finding it, you placed your Affection ſo much higher than the Diſcovery, that you neglected to boaſt of it; when you are calm, your Huſband will always find he has been wrong in ſaying that which might diſpleaſe you. His Senſe of this is all that can be neceſſary to your Happineſs. Do not expect, or wiſh him to confeſs ſo much; that is no eaſy Taſk; it is indeed of no Conſequence, and it will certainly put him out of Temper. There is no trifling Diſpute that will not be loſt as ſoon as it appears,

pears, under the Influence of ſuch a Conduct; and is not this a moſt deſirable Certainty? What Wiſh could you propoſe to yourſelf ſo much to your Advantage, as the never having while you live the leaſt Diſguſt with your Huſband? And this will give it you. What is it that you ſacrifice to purchaſe this? Obſtinacy. 'Tis nothing more. A Thing you are aſhamed of, and that gives Pain to the Perſon who poſſeſſes it, as much as to the Perſon againſt whom it is preſerved.

This, my Dear ***, is the Conſequence of conquering that Perverſeneſs of Temper which might keep alive a Quarrel. Let us conſider what could be the End of indulging it, and keeping up the Diſpute. While it ſubſiſted you would make your Huſband uneaſy; and this the more, the more he loves you. Can you wiſh to do this? Can you deſire to give Pain to a Perſon who is kind to you; or can you be ſo ungenerous as to take Pleaſure in ſeeing that Pain, when

you know it is the Effect of that Affection? But ſuppoſing Pride or Obſtinacy, or be it what it will that is the miſchievous Cauſe, could get the better of this Conſideration, which yet with you I am aſſured it cannot, ſuppoſing this could happen, yet after all the Neglect with which this would be to treat the Peace of one who ought to be Dear to you, would you have no Reſpect unto your own? You may be aſſured, my Dear, that the Wife cannot be eaſy, while ſhe gives her Huſband Pain. Their Hearts are one, and ſo muſt be their Thoughts, if either are to be happy. She who gives Uneaſineſs to her Huſband, gives double Miſery to herſelf, and to what purpoſe would you do this? What would you (but I ſhould not ſay You, my Dear, for it will never happen to you) but what would ſuch a Woman expect or hope to gain by her Spirit and her Obſtinacy? Is it the Victory? To what Purpoſe? What Matter is it whether the One or the Other be right in a

Thing

Thing which is of no Conſequence? Is it worth while, in the Purſuit of this, to hazard even the leaſt Conſideration in the World, much leſs the greateſt? Would ſhe wiſh to have her Huſband own that ſhe was right? To what End? That he may acknowledge ſhe is the wiſer. There is no Praiſe in this; for it is not her Province. There is no Credit to the Wife in conquering in ſuch a Diſpute; but there is much Diſgrace, at leaſt it will appear ſo to himſelf, for the Huſband to ſubmit; and he will never be upon the Terms of Friendſhip afterward. Is it explained? Does it appear to you, my Dear, that the continuance of a Diſpute with a Huſband is always diſquiet to the Wife? and that it may be her Deſtruction at laſt, if the loſs of her Huſband's Affection can deſerve that Name; and that there can be no Pleaſure in the Attempt; nor Pride in the Acquiſition of the Victory? I hope it does: If ſo, you ſee, my Dear, the Way to avoid it all: Obſerve it. ***.

LETTER VIII.

On Quarrels.

I Would hardly ſuppoſe, my Dear ***, that, after what I have been obſerving on the Subject of little Diſputes, and their not little Conſequences, you will ever be in Danger of falling into greater. When I have told you how eaſy it is to avoid them, and how important it is that you ſhould avoid them, I cannot ſuppoſe it probable that you will ever contradict my Opinion of your hearing Reaſon, and being guided by it; but when your Welfare is concerned, I would be attentive even to what cannot well happen, and would guard you almoſt againſt Impoſſibilities. I will ſuppoſe, though but for the Sake of ſuppoſing it, that you have let ſome little wayward Pettiſhneſs get the better of your Prudence and that you have anſwered peeviſhly t ſomething Peeviſh; for in all this I ſuppoſ

you

your Huſband in the Blame, ſince that is ſetting all above Diſpute, and pointing out your Conduct in the moſt difficult Article; the reſt is eaſy: Let us ſuppoſe then that he has been out of Temper, and that inſtead of Silence or gentleneſs of Words, you have anſwered him perverſely; what will be the natural Conſequence? Were he a weak Man, he would be louder and more violent; and he would keep alive the Argument to ſhew you that he would have the Victory: But your Huſband, my Dear, has Underſtanding. All theſe Things that I have been ſaying to you will be dictated to him by his own Prudence; and he will ſee the wrong Step that you have both taken in its true Light, and be uneaſy at the Conſequences. He will ſtop the Diſpute, and, to avoid farther Uneaſineſs, he will get up to go out. I do not think it is to your Advantage that he ſhould leave the Houſe in Diſpleaſure with you, and yet it is not eaſy to preven it. But there is a Conduct, that will y

reſtor

reſtore all: 'Tis the ſame that would have prevented all at firſt, and it is never too late to do what is right. If it be poſſible to get the better of a fooliſh Obſtinacy, tell him you are ſenſible that you are wrong, and all is at once over. This is the wiſeſt Courſe; but I am ſenſible 'tis difficult. If this be too much for that falſe Spirit which has made the Breach, to ſubmit to, at once, deſire him not to go; but by no Means attempt to hinder him otherwiſe than by Entreaties. I know it would be natural, between the Struggles of Love and Rage in the firſt Difference, to throw yourſelf between him and the Door, to fix upon his Hand, or by a thouſand other Methods to oppoſe his going; but theſe are wrong, they are dangerous: Remember he has his Obſtinacy as well as you, and he will not be conquered. 'Tis inflaming Things in the moſt fatal Manner to attempt it. Entreaties may ſtop him, but this cannot; and, if they fail, you will have Opportunities, while he

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is gone, to recollect how much you have been to blame; and his Abſence, if it be of no Uſe to him, will be of ſo much to you, that you will know your Error, and repent it.

I know you will, if ever this ſhould happen, be diſtreſſed, alarmed, and terrified in the higheſt Degree; and it is fit you ſhould be ſo: 'Twill be a Puniſhment not at all too great for the Fault which brought it on, and it will prevent a Repetition of the Fault again; after this I am to tell you that all your Alarms and Fears are groundleſs. Fancy not that he leaves you to viſit your Relations with Complaints, to mix in ſome gay Party, or indulge in ſome Debauch. He will employ the Moments better; he will reſolve the Occaſions of the Diſpute; he will foreſee the Conſequences; and without any other Communication than that with his own Mind, he will determine againſt all Occaſions of a like Diſſatisfaction.

His

His Stay will be ſhort; and he will return perfectly deſirous to be reconciled. Your Conduct then is eaſy. I have told you in what Temper, and with what Thoughts he will return. You will know how you are to meet him; both have had Opportunities to recollect; both have been convinced by that Recollection how wrong you have been in every preceding Step; both wiſh it had not happened: What is there that remains then but that you both forget. Meet him, my Dear, at his Return, as if you had done nothing to diſpleaſe him, nor had yourſelf been diſpleaſed in any Thing. This is the prudent Method, the Pain of Apologies will be prevented, and the Remembrance loſt for ever; except that in each of your Breaſts in ſecret there will live ſo much of it as to prevent a new Occaſion of Diſquiet. In this underſtand me properly, my Dear: I do not mean that you ſhould run with all the Chearfulneſs of an expecting Joy to meet him: Let it not ſeem that what has

given

given him Pain has had ſo little Effect upon you: Let your Looks ſay that you have conſidered, and are ſorry, although your Tongue ſpeak nothing: Meet him with all the Satisfaction that could attend a Reconciliation; but name no Word of it.

Let me, for I am all this Time ſuppoſing what are nearly Impoſſibilities, let me add a Conſideration yet more remote from all Degrees of Probability; yet let me Name it to you, my Dear, as it might happen. Let me conſider your Huſband as leſs ſenſible of the Folly of ſuch a Diſagreement than yourſelf; let me conſider him of more Obſtinacy in his Temper; and that, after a longer ſtay than he ought to have made from you, that he returns leſs ſatisfied: Let me ſuppoſe him ſullenly ſilent, and totally diſregarding of you. The Circumſtance is Painful, and to you, who have been bred tenderly, it will be the more terrible: But remember, Child, that your own Indiſcretion has given Occaſion

ſion to what you ſuffer; nay, let me ſpeak freely, that it has deſerved it, at leaſt in ſome Degree, and you muſt bear it as your Puniſhment.

Heaven forbid, my deareſt ***, that I ſhould ever ſee this in Reality; but, to talk of Things as if they happened, let us conſider what you are in this Caſe to do. You would ſuffer too much already by the Diſpute, to think of Inflaming it. You would now thoroughly wiſh it over, and be ready to abjure all future Peeviſhneſs, could this be overlooked. Recollect that your Huſband loves you tenderly. I do not ſuppoſe a Circumſtance like this will ever happen to you, becauſe it cannot happen but by Faults of which I know you never will be guilty; but if it ſhould have chanced, you would diſcover that it was becauſe he loved you that he was ſo much offended. We regard Offences, my Child, not in Proportion to their own weight, ſo much as to the Value in which

which we held the Perſon that is guilty of them; therefore a Trifle from you, whom he eſteems and loves, will give more Pain than all that could be offered from a Perſon whom he diſregarded. When you have thus far underſtood the Nature of your own Fault, and of his Reſentment, you will not urge him farther.

All that he can expect from you, let him look upon you as ever ſo much to blame, is to be ſenſible of it, and to be ſorry that it has happened. You will be both, and there will be no Difficulty to let him ſee you are. The Hour of Perverſeneſs may laſt till Night; but if you have entreated with leſs Eagerneſs a Reconciliation till that Time, be then more ſolicitous, more earneſt in it, and dread to Sleep in Unforgiveneſs. What you have ſolicited in Vain before, you will perhaps now find eaſy to obtain; and do not omit to requeſt it tenderly. Love is the Band of your Friendſhip; Love is the proper

Healer

Healer of all Breaches. Its Power is not limited to preſerving Amity; there is ſcarce a Danger that can threaten (but that is leſs than may be ſaid) there is not a Wound it can receive, but Love will obviate, or will heal. Let it not at all appear in the lighteſt Article of your Behaviour, that your Affection has ſuffered the leaſt Degree of Violence. Let that ſhew itſelf entire, and look down upon all little Animoſities as beneath its Concern. Let your Tenderneſs, that real Tenderneſs which you have ſo often gloried in to me, mix itſelf with every Sentiment: Let that give a gentle Softneſs to all you ſay, and communicate its peaceful Influence to even the minuteſt Incident. You will prevail. The Diſagreement has been but of a few Hours; it has been about a Trifle; he will perceive that you look on it as over, and it will be forgotten.

I know I am not to explain myſelf to you on the Word, when I remind you that

Love

Love will be an overmatch for all the perverſeneſs of Mind that he can poſſibly have taken up, who is the Object of it. I do not mean that Love to the Companion or Acquaintance, which every one poſſeſſes, and looks upon as great; I do not mean that mixture of Affection and Eſteem which we call Friendſhip; I do not mean that reverend Affection which the Child has for its Parent; or that earneſt fondneſs, paſſionate and tender as it is, which the Parent expreſſes for his Child. Theſe are in their proper Sphere, powerful and great; but theſe are not the Paſſion you will feel, and which will be your Paſſport through all Dangers and all Difficulties in this Road of Marriage. I mean that Paſſion which you conceived for him (whom you have married before you knew him perfectly) heightened, improved, completed by the Eſteem, the Gratitude, and Tenderneſs with which it now looks upon him, as Friend, Patron and Benefactor. This is the Paſſion I would be under-

ſtood to mean; and this, my Dear ***, none better knows than you in its full Force, and in its greateſt Extent. This is the Paſſion, which, while your Peace is dear to you, you muſt cheriſh in your Heart. This, which exceeds by infinite Degrees all that is called Love between other Perſons: This, which you know, ſtrengthened by Virtue, and authoriſed as a Duty, is worthy of another Name; and is too great for one that is ſo trifled with.

This Paſſion, will teach you that your Huſband's Peace and Pleaſure are as much yours as his: Will you not then be grieved that you have wounded the one, or interrupted the other? You will feel it; and your own Intereſt alone would prompt you to atone for the Offence, and heal the Breach. Let it not enter once into your Thought which of you was to blame: Whoever happened to begin the Folly, both were to blame, ſince both continued it: But your

Care

Care is of your own Conduct. Have no Eye to ſee the fault your Huſband has committed; but employ all your Vigilance to diſcover, and all your Aſſiduity to amend your own. I will not believe it poſſible; for it is not in Nature that a firſt Quarrel, and that about a Trifle, can be beyond the reach of ſuch a Remedy. I will ſuppoſe it paſt, atoned, repented on both Sides, and forgotten; but deareſt ***, be cautious of a Second. The Firſt was difficult to Remedy, this may be incurable.

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LETTER IX.

On Inconſtancy.

I Perſuade myſelf, deareſt ***, that I have mentioned to you all the little Foibles of your Mind, all the Weakneſſes to which your Temper may be liable; and in them all the Errors (for I will not call them by ſo coarſe a Name as Faults) that it is poſſible you can fall into. I have ſhewn you their Conſequences, and I have ſhewn them truly. I know you will have the Guard upon yourſelf to avoid them: But this is not all I have to mention to you. There may be Foibles, and in Conſequence of theſe Foibles, Errors in your Huſband alſo; and as the Cuſtom of the World gives greater Liberty to Men, they may be conſiderable.

Theſe will require as much of your Prudence to ſubdue as thoſe of your own; they will

will be, believe me, almoſt as much within the Influence of your Prudence; and you need not be told they are as much your concern. I have cautioned you by all the gentle Means that can be thought of, to endeavour to get the better of that Danger, of thoſe many Dangers, let me ſay, which attend that free uſe of Wine among Men, which a bad Cuſtom has authoriſed and made too univerſal. Among the Dangers to which it expoſes Men, I have told you that the moſt formidable Attack, is made in the Point which of all others will affect you moſt, their Conſtancy to the Marriage Bed. Many a Man, whoſe ſober Thoughts deteſt and abhor the Violation, has been led into it by this Folly, by the unjuſtifiable and cruel Perſuaſions and Example of the Company. I have given you my Sentiments as to the Methods you may and ought to take to prevent ſuch an Incident: But that I may not leave you unprepared for any Part of the

Conduct of a good Wife, let us ſuppoſe that it has already happened.

Let us imagine that, loſt in the Effects of Wine, and led by the Follies of his Company, he has been falſe to your Bed, and you have heard of it—What is to be your Reception of ſuch mortifying Intelligence? Let *Paſſion* counſel you, and *Rage* will be the reſult; Anger, Upbraidings, Tears, Reproaches. But to what End theſe, and how authoriſed? Let Paſſion guide others, but do you liſten to a better Monitor—to Reaſon. You are informed that he has wronged you in this tender Point; you wiſh he had not, and you wiſh he would not again. This is Reaſon. He has been guilty of it under the Intoxication of Wine; would you have him repeat it Sober? Certainly not. Avoid then the Things which might urge him to it; and do not, in reſenting a leſſer Evil, bring on yourſelf a greater. Conſider firſt what you

may

may naturally ſuppoſe to be *his* Sentiments, before you enter into any Reſolutions of *your own*. Men deſpiſe Vice, although it favours their Deſigns: They reverence Virtue that repulſes them. What then muſt not be the Preference which they give unto complying Virtue. This is the Wife's great Charm, and this will hold of Force for ever. 'Tis almoſt certain that he abhors the Perſon who has ſhared his Crime; and that, in Compariſon of you, ſhe is unworthy of a farther Thought. If this be the Caſe, all that you wiſh is done; and what would you attempt farther? Be ſilent, forget that it has happened; you may; for he will not forget it. The Offence will appear the more unpardonable in him for your Goodneſs, and he will not repeat it. There is infinite Difference, my Dear, between the Error of having been once drawn into an Act of Infidelity by Solicitations, and againſt Inclination, at a Time too when the very Faculties were overpowered; and the coolly, volun-

tarily, and by Deſign engaging in an Amour. I own, that the Offence is great, with all its Palliations; I know, that, to a Woman who doats upon her Huſband, the leaſt wrong of this kind muſt be the Source of a thouſand Anxieties; but Things are what they are, only by Compariſon; and if you will view this in the Light of that Compariſon, the Grounds of which I have given you, it will appear almoſt nothing.

Thoſe who ſpeak of Things only in the general, may call *a co certed Scheme of Intrigue*, and a *ſingle* Eſcape from Chaſtity, by the ſame Name; but you, Child, who ſhould ſhudder, and with Reaſon, at the Thought of a Man whom you love and honour, and the being beloved by whom is your greateſt and moſt rational Happineſs, preferring another to you, ſoliciting her by an unwearied Aſſiduity, neglecting you during that Aſſiduity, and expending his Fortune in the Attempt; you will obſerve,

my

my Dear, an infinite Difference between all *this*, and an Act of Chance, unpremeditated, and never to be repeated.

The Cuſtom of the World renders the leaſt Eſcape from Virtue, on the Woman's Part, unpardonable; but the Men conſtitute the World, and make its Cuſtoms. Yet may we pardon this, ſince to a regard to us it owes its Foundation. No Apology to Extenuation is allowed in favour of a Woman. To offend once, is as bad as to have been criminal for ever. Proſtitution is Proſtitution, under whatever Circumſtances; and *that* being once violated, which owed its worth to its being held *inviolable*, the Source of Eſteem is never to be recovered; and Love without Eſteem, my Child, is not the Paſſion for a Wife, but for a Harlot.

You have been taught to look upon the Chaſtity of Woman in this Light, and it is not fit that it ſhould be ſeen in any other;

for

for not only the Cuſtom of the World, but Reaſon itſelf, places it there. But the Virtue of Men is not to be ſet upon the ſame Foundation. I do not ſay that Reaſon makes it otherwiſe; but Cuſtom, which, in many Things, is as powerful as Reaſon, and in this more ſo, has thus eſtabliſhed it. But we are not to ſee the whole in ſo diſadvantageous and unfair a Light as it might appear upon this View. As the Men have ſome Palliation for a fault of Inadvertency, they have a thouſand different Temptations to it: We, who are reckoned, and who ought to be reckoned, unpardonable, if we tranſgreſs, have none of the Allurements, nor are in the Way of any of their Hazards. We do not drink, we do not indulge ourſelves in looſe talk, nor do we commemorate the Names of Objects of Proſtitution, as they do over their Glaſſes, Names of Perſons known to be Wicked, and who are always at Hand to be ſo. We keep no Company with the Diſſolute and the Abandoned,

doned, and conſequently we have none of the Temptations to Ill, that Examples throw continually into their way. If we ſee in Public an unfortunate Woman, who has had but one Slip in her Conduct, we ſee her pointed at and avoided. On the contrary, if a Man appears, who is ſuppoſed to have paſſed a Life of Proſtitution, he is not the leſs careſſed even by our own Sex, how much ſoever this is to their Shame, but appears to all an agreeable Character.

This is the prejudice of Cuſtom; 'tis impoſſible to cure it; and you, my Dear, like the reſt of the World, muſt ſubmit to it. But though you cannot be a Reformer of Mankind, the Goodneſs of your Diſpoſition will, I make no Doubt, be able to continue your Huſband in the good Sentiments he already has; and this is all you have to care about. I have ſuppoſed an Eſcape from Goodneſs like to this, poſſible to happen to him, becauſe he is a Man; but as

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he is your Huſband I think it ſcarcely poſſible. Your Image will be ſo fixed and rooted in his Breaſt, that it will have no Room for any other. Your Affection will place the venal Fondneſs of the Proſtitute, ſhould he ever fall into ſuch Company, in the meaneſt and moſt abject Light: And his Love, joined with his Eſteem for you, will keep his Faith inviolable. I would guard you againſt every Error that it is poſſible can have Place in the Conduct of a Wife, and in that Light I am obliged to repreſent to you every Situation in which it is poſſible for a Huſband to be placed. I carry this Conſideration no farther, ſince I am aſſured that more cannot concern you. The virtuous Huſband of a virtuous, and affectionate, and an agreeable Wife, may, not impoſſibly under the Infatuations I have named, be led into a ſingle and an accidental Folly; but he can never ſeriouſly give Place to another Paſſion, or engage deliberately in the Purſuit of another Love.

You will doubt of this perhaps when you ſee Faults of this kind in Men, whoſe Wives appear to you completely agreeable. But you are to know, that ſuch Wives either appear to you in a better Light than they ought; perhaps in a better Light than they can, to the diſcerning Eye of their Huſbands, or elſe that thoſe Faults in the Huſband are the Fruit of Faults in themſelves; of Paſſion and Reſentment indulged at the Expence of Prudence; of thoſe Miſtakes in the Conduct of a married Life, which are too natural to a young Wife, even to one of virtuous Principles, and againſt which my deareſt ***, I am therefore arming you by Example, as well as by Admonition.

You will remember, that your Huſband's Affection to you is the great Guard againſt his thinking of another. You will remember that this Affection, although it were firſt inſpired by your *Perſon*, can only be ſupported and kept up by your *Conduct*. This

ſurely

ſurely is a Leſſon of all others the moſt important to a Wife, and yet what Wife regards it? Let us ſuppoſe the ſame Fault, in the Huſband of a leſs prudent Wife, which I have mentioned as poſſible in yours. I have ſhewn you how you will prevent its ever being repeated; and I am certain that what I have ſaid will be found true in Practice. Inſtead of that ſilent Concern, that tempered Uneaſineſs with which you would have received the Offender, we will ſuppoſe her flying out into Reſentments and Reproaches, deſpiſing his Acknowledgment of the Fault, and utterly diſregarding his Aſſurances that he will never repeat it. What is the Conſequence? The Huſband, who, in conſciouſneſs of his Fault, would have been patient under a moderate Reproof, is out of Temper with Continuance of it: He begins to think that, in acknowledging his Error, he has atoned for it: And that, in the Promiſe of not repeating it, he has deſerved that it ſhould be forgotten. He

may

may have appeared faulty to *Himſelf* at firſt; but his *Wife* appears faulty to him now. He grows out of Temper in his Turn; Home is uneaſy to him; the Behaviour of his Wife diſagreeable; he remembers the Fondneſs of the Proſtitute, which at firſt he had recollected with Contempt, as having ſome Merit in it under the Compariſon of this turbulent Scene—He returns to her—He had at firſt been criminal only through Inadvertence, he repeats it now on Choice. In the place of an angry Wife, he has a Perſon whoſe good Humour is to be purchaſed at perhaps no immoderate Price, and he continues with her. This is not all; he will be tired, you ſay: He will ſo; for where there is neither Virtue nor true Affection, the Paſſion is not Love, and it will ſoon wear off. But what is the Conſequence? He is ſatiated: He diſtaſtes the Perſon and the Behaviour of this purchaſed Miſtreſs: But whither ſhall he go? Shall it be Home? What, to freſh

Quarrels,

Quarrels, and louder Reproaches? No; he looks upon Peace as ſacrificed there, and therefore, in that Place, he ſeeks not after it: He gives it up, and in that Reſignation, he does indeed deſtroy it for ever.

He will leave this deſpiſed Miſtreſs; yet will he not return to an injured and an enraged Wife; he goes to ſome other. The Fence of Virtue and of Reſerve is broken down, and there is nothing to oppoſe him. He feels a Pleaſure in Variety; Novelty has irreſiſtible Charms. He can viſit no public Place, but he fancies himſelf in a *Seraglio*; a Multitude are at his Service, and *he drops the Handkerchief* wherever he pleaſes. Unleſs ſome Accident prevent him, he ſtops not till he has been the Round of all. 'Tis almoſt a Million to one but both his Conſtitution and his Fortune become impared in the higheſt Degree during the Scene of Proſtitution. But even this is not the greateſt Fear that may have Place in the Boſom of the

the in-vain-repenting Wife. 'Tis too likely that, among the Numbers of theſe ſucceeding Miſtreſſes, he meets ſome agreeable, artful Creature, whom Intereſt, and perhaps Affection (for theſe People are not to be ſuppoſed quite above its Reach) joined to Intereſt, engages in the Attempt of fixing herſelf upon him for ever. Accuſtomed to Deceit, the Artifices are innumerable by which theſe Women will purſue a Scheme like this; and the Wife ought to tremble when ſhe makes her Huſband deſperate, while ſhe ſees how many of them ſucceed. If once this be the Conſequence, all Proſpect, all Hope is at an End. A Separation is the certain Conſequence, either a formal or an eſſential one: And he who would, under the proper Conduct of a Wife, have avoided a ſecond Fault, never arrives at a ſecond Virtue. As Virtue never appears ſo much herſelf as when oppoſed to Vice; ſo Prudence is in no Circumſtance ſeen ſo much to her Advantage, or with ſo large a Share of her

own Luſtre, as when we view her in Contraſt with her oppoſite—*Raſhneſs of Conduct.* I have given you, my Dear, a Picture of what is *human Life*, it may be new to you; it may ſurpriſe you; but it is real. I have ſhewn you how much, how very much depends, in many Things, upon a little: Be aſſured that it is thus in all Occurrences, and while you are ſenſible of this, be ever upon your Guard in the Beginning of any Thing that may be of Conſequence. Nothing, is ſo eaſy as to prevent, what it may be impoſſible to remedy. This is what many have found too late; let it be your Happineſs to know it in Time, and let it be mine, my Dear, to have informed you of it. Aſk the moſt unfortunate of Mankind from what their ſeveral Diſtreſſes have ariſen, and if they will be ingenuous, they will confeſs, from Trifles: Preſs them to be free in their Acknowledgments, and they will own the great Source to have been their own Obſtinacy. They would have given

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the World afterwards to have omitted ſomething they had done, or to have done ſomething which they knew right, and which they did not do; when it was too late.

All theſe Omiſſions, all theſe Improprieties, have been in themſelves Trifles; but in their Conſequences, important. They have appeared little at the Time, though formidable in the higheſt Degree afterwards. Beware of them in Time. Look not, ſo much, upon what is the Thing you are about to do at this Time; conſider what will be the Event of it To-morrow, a Week, a Month, a Year hence, or for ever. You will ſtart at the Apprehenſion; and 'tis well you ſhould do ſo. It is better to be terrified now, than to feel the Reality of all that you foreſee, hereafter. This is the Alternative, my Dear, and I know I need not tell you which you are to chuſe. You are happy in your Huſband, and your great-

eſt Wiſh is that you may continue happy. 'Tis in your own Power to do ſo, if you pleaſe, and it will depend, not upon the Condeſcenſion of making up a Breach, but on the Prudence in avoiding one. The one is difficult, perhaps it is in general impoſſible; the other eaſy. The one muſt be attended with Pain; the other with the greateſt Pleaſure. Think how glorious a Recollection it would be, at an advanced Age, to be able to ſay, you never had a Diſpute. Think how it will imbitter the ſweeteſt Moments of a ſucceeding Life to recollect, that he whoſe Fondneſſes now charm you, has been ſevere, averſe, rude. Avoid the poſſibility of ſuch a Recollection. The Peace of a married Life is like Chaſtity in her who has a Right to poſſeſs it, the great Value depends upon its being perfect and entire; and the Pride and Pleaſure of remembering that it has never been attacked, is above all Deſcription.

My

My Dear, ſo much depends upon the Scenes, I have been engaged in deſcribing to you, that you muſt not think me tedious. Theſe are the Dictates of Love and of Experience; they cannot deceive you either by Wilfulneſs or Accident. Your Fortune is in your own Hands; you depend on no one but yourſelf for all that you can expect in your whole Life: Be prudent in the Beginning, that you may be rich in the End.

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LETTER X.

On Confidence and Secrets.

IT is impoſſible, my Dear ***, that a Man can love the Perſon whom he does not eſteem; at leaſt that Love which a Wife is to expect from the Huſband, cannot ſubſiſt without it. The Paſſion is violent at the firſt; and with it the generous Breaſt of him who poſſeſſes it, entertains ſo high a Reſpect, and ſo implicit a Reverence for the Object, that this Eſteem is paid without his once enquiring whether it be deſerved. The Opinion which he took upon *Credit*, while he was a Lover (for 'tis impoſſible, under thoſe Circumſtances to know a Woman thoroughly) he eſtabliſhes, when he is become an Huſband, upon as weak a Foundation, his *Affection*. 'Tis well if ſhe, who is thus honoured with his good Opinion, merit it. If ſhe does, ſhe

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is happy; but if, after the Tranſport and Novelty of the firſt Days are over, he finds her deficient, he will deſpiſe, or at the leaſt will diſregard her; not in Proportion to her own want of Merit, but in Proportion to that falſe Opinion his Fondneſſes eſtabliſhed.

You will remember, that the Merit I am here naming to you as the Foundation and Support of this Eſteem with which the Huſband honours his new Wife, is that of her good Qualities; the Merit of her Heart, not of her Form, for that he had before conſidered. The firſt Teſtimony he uſually gives of his Eſteem is the confiding in her, and revealing to her all his Secrets. This is done in Confidence, and the Truſt ought to be inviolable, although he ſays Nothing, he means it ſhould be ſo; and he may pardon, but he never can forget, the Violation of it.

I am too ſenſible, my Dear, of the Weakneſs of a female Heart, not to guard you in the ſtrongeſt Manner againſt its natural Effects on this Occaſion. Uſe yourſelf to Secrecy and Reſerve, accuſtom your Mind to it in Trifles, in Things that are of no Importance, and when you can reſiſt the Temptations that occaſionally offer of divulging theſe, you will have little Difficulty in Silence, when it is a Duty. You are to remember, that he who repoſes the Truſt in you, knows that your Sex is not renowned for Secrecy. While he entruſts you, he is not without Doubts of the general, howſoever free he may be from thoſe of the particular Kind; and he will therefore be in ſome Degree upon the Watch againſt your Frailty. In confiding in you againſt this Opinion of the Sex in general, he gives you a Proof of that Preeminence which in his Eſteem he allows you over them: Remember the Credit in which you ſtand with him, and do not violate

late or forfeit it. You will ſay it were better that the Wife were not entruſted with her Huſband's Secrets, ſince her keeping them can be of no good, and the leaſt Violation of the Truſt will be attended with ill. Perhaps I agree with you, my Dear, that in Theory it may be ſo; but although proper, it is impracticable. Thoſe who love truly have but one Heart between them: Their Thoughts, their Cares, their Concerns are in common. Confidence is the natural Offspring of Affection, and he who loves tenderly can keep no Secret. Men have been ruined by their Folly in this Reſpect; let them be profited of their Virtues: They have entruſted Things, in which their Lives and Fortunes have been concerned, to thoſe with whom they have had only a criminal Acquaintance; is it poſſible then that they can refrain where Virtue and where Honour authoriſe the Truſt, and where the Perſon who receives the Secret is equally intereſted with them?

them ? In the one Caſe they have been betrayed. Keep up, my deareſt ***, the Diſtinction between Virtue and Vice ſo far as in you lies, and let him who confides in you be ſafe; and all that he entruſts to you ſacred. You who, while you look with Terror upon the Charge, wiſh, or fancy that you wiſh, he would withhold it, would be the firſt to complain, and you would have Reaſon, if you were not entruſted; you would know that you had but a ſlender hold on his Affection, who held you at a Diſtance from his Heart. Do not be offended that he does that, which you would be offended, and with Reaſon, if he omitted to do; but when you are entruſted, remember that the Eſteem or the Contempt in which your Huſband is to hold you for ever, depends upon your Faith and Secrecy.

It would be hard to ſay, perhaps, whether more Families have had their Peace diſturbed by the unaffectionate Reſerve in the Huſband,

Huſband, or by the idle talking of the Wife; whether more have been Sacrifices to the not entruſting of a Secret, or to the divulging of it; but this is certain, that the Offence on the one Part is leſs than on the other: and that the one may be with Reaſon pardoned and reſpected afterwards, but that the other cannot.

There is ſcarce a Family in this buſy talking Town, whoſe moſt ſecret Affairs are not perfectly known; nay, tho' it be ever ſo improper that they ſhould be ſo: And to what do you ſuppoſe this is owing? Not to the Men, for they are generally accuſtomed to Buſineſs, and find no Difficulty in being ſilent when it is proper. The Wife is always at the Bottom: She entruſts ſome boſom Friend, not remembering that the Breach of Confidence is as much made in that, as if ſhe had revealed it to a Thouſand; and 'tis from this dear Friend a thouſand know it. My Dear, be upon your

Guard

Guard in the ſtricteſt Manner againſt theſe Confidences. Remember how few Women have Secrecy in their Nature: Remember that, in doing this, you are confeſſing that yourſelf have it not, then why ſhould you expect it in another? Remember, that the moſt important of all Concerns, the Eſteem, and good Opinion of your Huſband, depend upon your Silence, and ought to be your Guard againſt this Breach of Faith: And that Nothing of all this is upon her whom you are entruſting: Nothing more than an inſignificant Promiſe to an indifferent Perſon. If you cannot keep your own Secret, why ſhould you ſuppoſe that ſhe will keep it for you? If all theſe Motives could not influence you to do it, why do you ſuppoſe ſhe will, who has not any one of them? Remember the improbability of her Silence, and forbear. Remember the Conſequences of her diſcloſing what you truſt her with, and tremble. I am certain, that all the Breaches of Faith, and divulging of Secrets, that

that have diſturbed the Quiet of ſo many Families, have been owing to this ſingle Miſtake of truſting ſome one Perſon; and it is therefore that I Caution you ſo ſtrongly and ſo particularly againſt it. There is a Pleaſure in whiſpering a Secret; you know it; an uncommon, tho' a childiſh and a diſhoneſt Pleaſure, elſe why did you reveal it? Is ſhe to whom you have revealed it leſs a Woman than yourſelf? Has ſhe leſs Temptation to the doing it? She will have the ſame Pleaſure in telling it to another, be aſſured, that you had in revealing it to her, and ſhe will place the ſame Confidence in the Perſon to whom ſhe reveals it, that you placed in her; the ſame that he who entruſted yourſelf with it, placed in you. Are not theſe broken; and can you doubt but that the reſt will all be broken like them? But this is not all your Danger. The Secret will run ſwift enough thro' all the female World this Way, and, while all have it in Truſt, all will repeat it: but there

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is an Incident, and 'tis a very common one among Women, under which it may, and it will be divulged at once to all the World, and you ſhall be accuſed of having told it. Womens' Friendſhips with one another, my Dear, are very frail; they are contracted without Thought, and they are broken without Provocation. A thouſand little Things may occur to occaſion this, and the leaſt of theſe will be ſufficient. Women who break Friendſhip never become indifferent: They are violent Enemies. As they were earneſt in their Friendſhips without enquiring whether there was Reaſon, they are in the ſame Manner outrageous in their Animoſities, without knowing any Cauſe. This is the Fickleneſs and the haſty Temper of the Sex, and we are all more or leſs addicted to it. You muſt expect it in your moſt intimate Acquaintances, and therefore let Prudence dictate to you never to put it into the Power of any of them to hurt you. Remember you may quarrel with

with the Perſon you are about to entruſt: Remember this may happen without any Fault of your own, and therefore don't ſuppoſe, that though it is neceſſary you *ſhould*, it is poſſible you *can* guard againſt it. Recollect with yourſelf what would be the Conſequence of having what your Huſband, out of the Abundance of his Affection and Eſteem, truſted you with, ſpread through every Company, under the aggravating Circumſtance of yourſelf, having been the Perſon who diſcloſed it; and while you ſee the Danger, avoid, what you may, if you think proper, the Occaſion.

I do not imagine that you will be in the Way of any Inadvertence of Conſequence, of this Kind. There are Families where there are Secrets on which the Welfare and the very Being of the Perſons concerned depend; but you are in no ſuch Situation. Between People who have had your little Dealings or Connections with the World

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(for your Huſband has had very little more of this than yourſelf) whoſe Friends and neareſt Relations made the Alliance, whoſe Fortunes are ſo affluent, and whoſe Characters are ſo much above the Reach even of Malice, there can be no matter of eſſential and neceſſary Secrecy. But where there are not great Things, there are always little Ones, and in the Deficience of the others theſe become important. The Breach of Secrecy, in the moſt trivial of theſe, is not the leſs a Breach for the unimportance of the Subject. Although he who entruſts you ſhould not have Reaſon to ſet his Heart in any great Degree upon the Article; yet Caprice may have been in the Place of Judgment, and he may have done ſo, though he needed not. This may be an Occaſion of his taking the higheſt Offence. Or even if it be not thus, ſuppoſe him to regard the matter as lightly as you do; yet he will be ſorry, if he be not vexed, to find you cannot be truſted. He will with

Reaſon

Reaſon determine never to confide in you when the Nature of the Occaſion renders the Confidence important; and you will be unhappy if you but ſuſpect that there is ſomething in his Mind which he keeps from you.

You ſee, my Dear, on how very little Things the Happineſs of a married Life may depend. You will loſe ſome Part of your Huſband's Eſteem, which, to a wiſe Woman, is the moſt valuable of all Treaſures, by this idle Intemperance of Speech; and you will be ſubject to Hours, Days, Years, perhaps, of Uncertainty and Uneaſineſs, while there is, or while you do but fancy that there is, ſomething in his Thoughts with which he does not entruſt you. 'Tis poſſible ſomething may occur in the Courſe of his Affairs which he may wiſh to reveal to you; but dares not. To a full Mind there is no Relief like the having a boſom Friend, to whom it may

in Safety unload its inmoſt Weight. Where is the Huſband to look for this Friend, if not in his Wife? And why will you rob him of the Advantage? Why will you give him occaſion (for this may be the Event) to ſeek for that Friendſhip and Fidelity in ſome other Breaſt? Why will you give yourſelf the Pain of this real Diſtreſs! or ſuppoſing Nothing of this poſſible to happen, why would you lay yourſelf under the Danger of imaginary Occaſions of it; and lament at once the Defect of his Eſteem, and ſome hidden Source of Diſquiet, when both perhaps are imaginary?

All this, my Dear, depends upon the little Folly of talking of that which ſhould be kept in Silence. Don't wonder, that I have been ſo careful to admoniſh you againſt the Thing itſelf, becauſe it appears inconſiderable; 'tis not ſo, you ſee, in its Effects. 'Tis on theſe little Points of Conduct that I chiefly deſigned to write to you; and it is the

the more neceſſary, becauſe you can meet with no other Inſtructions on this head. The Moraliſts have diſregarded theſe Things, as trivial, and below their Conſideration; yet, trivial as they are, 'tis on them that all the Colour of our Lives depends. They will adviſe you ſeriouſly, wiſely, and gravely concerning Vices, and their Effects; but this to you is needleſs. I know you have none: Nay, you have not the very Seeds or Principles of them in your Temper; but, my Dear, theſe little Inadvertencies, to which alone you are expoſed, and concerning which they have written nothing; theſe are the Rocks on which the Number of the married ſplit. I have that Confidence in the natural Chaſtity and common Virtue of my Sex to believe, that an Hundred are unhappy for One that is vicious: But ſure our Happineſs, my Dear, is worth our Care, and this is the Way to guard it.

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LETTER XI.

Of natural Imperfections.

I Have led you by the Hand, my dear Niece, through ſeveral of the difficult and dangerous Stages in the Beginning of a married Life. I have been attentive to the Decorum as well as to the Duties you owe to your Huſband; nor is there the moſt delicate Subject which I would leave untouched. Theſe are the Occaſions on which you will be left uninformed by thoſe who have written; and it will be dangerous to miſtake, and very difficult to determine, without Miſtake, to whom you may apply in Converſation. I need not tell you that I am always at your Service, and that you will make me happy in employing me: I ſhall take it as a Mark of your Prudence that you do not leave yourſelf ſolely to your own Opinion; and my Happineſs is indeed ſo much dependant on yours, that you need not

not doubt my utmoſt Aſſiſtances. I have ſometimes thought this a ſufficient Reaſon why I might have ſaved myſelf and you the Trouble of theſe Letters; but it is not ſo. Mine is not a Time of Life at which I can expect to ſee many more Years. Theſe Letters will be a Legacy worth more to you than all I can give you beſide, and by this Means you may have my Advice complete. This was one Reaſon that induced me to write them; but this was not the only one. We deliver our Thoughts without Interruption upon Paper, and 'tis eaſier to put them into Method.

Among theſe and other Conſiderations which might be named, you will, as I have done, find many that alone might ſerve for Apologies both to myſelf and you for the Trouble; but I have fallen upon another, which I had not before remembered, and which alone were enough. My laſt has been upon the Subject of Secrecy. I have

moſt earneſtly requeſted of you to preſerve this inviolable How then can you at once aſk and follow my Advice? The very applying to me is breaking that Secrecy which I have recommended to you to be held ſo ſacred. This muſt appear from the Courſe of that Letter; but the Subject of this will be more evidently a Proof of it. I had Reaſon when I began; I have double Reaſon to proceed. My Dear, lay by my Letters with as much Care as I have written them: Inſtead of conſulting me, have recourſe to them, whenever you want advice. There may be Subjects on which you would be aſhamed; there may be Subjects on which you ought to be afraid to ſpeak to me: Conſult theſe in my Place, and it ſhall be my Care, as I eſteem it my Duty, upon this Conſideration to make them as complete as my Abilities will let me.

I have told you, my Dear, there may be Occaſions on which it would not be proper

per nor right for you to apply even to me. I have mentioned Secrets, with which it would be criminal to entruſt even your neareſt Friends : I am about to Name the moſt tender and the moſt important of them all.

You will remember, Child, that, as mortal Creatures, we are all liable to Imperfections. It was not intended that we ſhould be Perfect, nor are any of us ſo. Some have more, and ſome have leſs, of theſe Deficiencies which we inherit from our Nature ; but none is wholly without them. You muſt have conſidered your Huſband as no better than a human Creature, altho' you have Reaſon to eſteem him one of the moſt amiable among them. If you married him under this Conſideration, it was with the Expectation that there muſt be ſome Defect, ſome Imperfection about him. The Eyes of Affection may not be open to this, be it what it will; but it

would be ſtrange indeed if it ſhould not be ſomething. That Affection may be ſo powerful in you, that it may diſguiſe this Defect, whatſoever it is, altho' great; or it may be ſo little, as not to be worthy of Regard: Still I tell you, however, you will find ſomething. Do not be ſurpriſed that you knew it not long ſince; for who expoſes purpoſely his Weakneſſes? Men are careful to hide all their Faults, but eſpecially thoſe of Nature, and they are right to do ſo, ſince they are not Things in which themſelves are guilty, or which their Application can amend. That you diſcovered this not before, be it what it will, is no Shame to you; if you have not yet diſcovered it, 'tis to your honour. Your Fondneſs has ſhut your Eyes to the Sight of it; but as the Fondneſs of the Bride does not laſt for ever, altho', a better Paſſion ſupplies its Place in the fixed and rational Love of the Wife, you, if you have not already diſcovered will moſt aſſuredly diſcover ſomething

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of this Kind. This is a Secret, my Dear, with which your Huſband entruſts you, whether he chuſes it or not. This is a Confidence which you poſſeſs as a Wife; this is of all Secrets the moſt important; and all the Duties of the Wife join in declaring that it muſt be inviolable. It may be imprudent to betray the others; but to give Breath to the leaſt Hint concerning this, is criminal: 'tis what deſerves Puniſhment, and what will have it. 'Tis a Secret which, when diſcloſed but to one Perſon beſide yourſelf, never can be kept. 'Tis a Secret which your Huſband will be conſcious none could divulge beſide yourſelf; and as he will at once remember the Obligations under which Nature, Love, Gratitude, and Reaſon laid you to have kept it; and recollect the unjuſt Diſgrace that will be reflected upon him from your divulging it. He will have both Reſentment in the higheſt Degree, and Reaſon alſo, in ſome Degree, never to forgive you. All the Contempt which

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the World will beſtow upon him on this Occaſion, he will return upon you; and he will have Juſtice, for his is a Fault of Nature, in which his own Mind has no Share; yours is your own and Voluntary.

When I tell you, my Dear, that it is natural to ſuppoſe, as no Man can be perfect, that he who has made you happy by his Choice, muſt, or may have ſome Defect, ſome Infirmity, or ſome Imperfection; I am as far from gueſſing what that may be, as I am from knowing that it is ſo. Some have from Nature a thouſand, ſome but one: In ſome the ſingle Imperfection is equal to a thouſand, in others it is inconſiderable. Whatever it be, if you have not diſcovered it, ſeek not after it. Although it is not in Nature to be ſo; yet you may believe, and it will be Virtue in you to believe, that he is perfect; at leaſt take your Diſcovery of it when that ſhall happen, upon your own Opinion, and not on that of any other.

'Tis

'Tis Virtue to be inſenſible of the Imperfections of a Friend, much more of a Huſband; and it accuſes her, who is too inquiſitive to diſtinguiſh, and too nice in the Regret with which ſhe endures them, of having in her Thoughts, if not within her Knowledge, others in whom they may be, or ſhe fancies they may be wanting.

I remember to have heard of a *Roman* Lady, who, when ſhe was blamed by her Huſband for not having told him that there was ſomething diſagreeable in his Breath, replied with that honourable Ignorance which became a virtuous Wife, that ſhe had ſuppoſed all Men were equally ſubject to this Defect. Oppoſe to this, my Dear, the Conduct of your unhappy Friend, you know who 'tis I mean, a Suſpicion, which, if innocent, ſhe could not have conceived to be the Beginning of all her Misfortunes, and it was a Beginning worthy of all that followed. Let not the Diſcourſe of others lead you to form

form Ideas, and to judge from thoſe Ideas of that in which they may deceive you; in which 'tis almoſt certain that they will deceive you. Be upon your Guard even againſt your own Senſes, that they do not miſlead you on ſo important and ſo dangerous a Subject; much more againſt the Diſcourſe of others, who perhaps mean nothing but to miſlead you. Be like the *Roman* Matron, in her Ignorance; and if you find in any thing your Huſband leſs agreeable than your uninformed Fancy made you ſuppoſe you ſhould, imagine that all Men are ſo. You have no Way to know, nor have you any Right to gueſs, that it is otherwiſe.

It is not only that your Huſband may with Right be offended at you for diſcloſing Imperfections, of which he is conſcious, and which, if it were in his Power, he would remedy; but which, as it is not, your Fault is the greater in revealing, as he has

has none in the bearing them. There is a hidden Danger to which you are expoſed in it, and by which you may ſuffer in ſome Degree unjuſtly; yet you will not deſerve any pity on that Head. You may betray to others, Defects and Imperfections in him, of which he is not conſcious in himſelf. Cuſtom and Familiarity will diſguiſe many Things to the Perſon unto whom they belong; and even ſelf-Love, if they are very diſagreeable ones, will ſometimes blind him to the Knowledge of them. What either of theſe Things would effect alone, both together will aſſuredly do with more Force. They will, in many of the leſſer Defects at leaſt, conceal them perfectly from the Perſon who is ſubject to them. In this Caſe there is a double Danger, and no Caution can be too great againſt it. This may be in all Reſpects the Caſe, my Dear, and therefore all this Caution is required in every Caſe: All this Abhorrence of revealing what it can do you no good to tell; but

but which it will be moſt diſagreeable to him to have told. You may, in revealing ſuch a little Secret, not only call down his Reſentment for your Want of friendly Secrecy; but you may appear to him in the yet more offenſive and unpardonable Light of an Inventor, as well as Propagator of his Scandal; as a malicious Perſon, who, out of your own unjuſt Diſtaſte to him, would endeavour, by falſe Accounts, to render him diſtaſteful to the World.

Think, my Dear, think with Horror on this Conſequence: What can be more terrible than for a Wife to have forfeited thus perfectly all Title to her Huſband's Confidence, Eſteem, and Friendſhip; and to have done all this, by what? By Folly. For what End? For none. It will aggravate the Conſideration, that ſhe is conſcious of her Innocence in the one Part of the Charge, as clearly as ſhe is of her Fault in the other. But how to

make

make that Innocence appear? Shall ſhe explain herſelf to her injured Huſband? There is no Word that can be named in the Tranſaction but will inflame the Diſpute. But ſuppoſe ſhe perſiſt, and think of bearing this in the Way to doing herſelf Juſtice, how is ſhe to obtain it? Her Huſband is her Judge, and he is poſſeſſed in favor of himſelf. It may be, a long Cuſtom has deadened his own Senſes, to that in himſelf, which is ſo diſagreeable to her: It may be an Infirmity, which, in its own Nature, is not to be diſtinguiſhed by the Perſon. There are many ſuch, and that in particular which was the Misfortune of the *Roman* Huſband is of that kind. Can ſhe perſuade him of that which he has no Conviction of in himſelf, and which concerns no other Perſon? Impoſſible. The Event is eaſy; Obſtinacy, and a Love of Contention, are added to the former Charge of her Want of Secrecy, and her Ill-will in the inventing the

Thing

Thing charged upon him: And under ſuch an Accumulation of Suſpicions, ſome Part of which at leaſt 'tis evident muſt be true, 'tis no Wonder that they become irrecoverable.

But, my Dear ***, here is another Thought moſt naturally ſtarted, which may at once alarm you, and make you very tender in your Diſtaſtes on theſe Accounts. You find we may be liable to Imperfections which ourſelves are not acquainted with: I think no Woman can be farther from the Appearance of but the leaſt of them, than yourſelf; and yet 'tis not impoſſible, although unknown to me, that ſomething of this kind may be too plain to your Huſband; though unknown, you ſee, even to yourſelf. Since then there is but a poſſibility that this may be the Caſe, can you be too tender in thoſe Cenſures which, though only in your own Mind, you fling upon your Huſband: How know you but while

while you are thus inquiſitive to find ſome natural Defect in him, he may be as induſtriouſly labouring to diſguiſe to himſelf ſome Imperfection of yours. Think, my Dear, how amiable a Light he will appear in, and in how hateful a one you would, could you be guilty of ſuch a Folly, in this Circumſtance. Do not ſuppoſe that the one may not happen as well as the other: Nay, do not flatter yourſelf that the one is at all leſs likely to happen than the other. You are, like him, an human Creature, and we are all liable, you know, to theſe Defects. You may not be ſenſible of it, altho' he is; for it is a moſt certain Truth, that many of theſe Things, though viſible in the moſt diſagreeable Manner to others, are quite hid from ourſelves. I do not ſuppoſe you, my Dear, ſubject to the Imperfection of this kind; much leſs can I think you capable of a Fault like the other. Pray underſtand me as I mean, as only laying down to you, who are a Wife, all that

may regard the Conduct of a Wife. Suppoſe ſome other; for it is impoſſible that you ſhould place yourſelf, as much as it is that I ſhould place you, in this Situation; imagine, I ſay, ſome other Perſon in it. The Wife, and the beloved Wife, (for that muſt be the Circumſtance of a virtuous, and a worthy Man) enjoying all that can be called real Satisfaction in this Life, and with a Proſpect of its continuing ſo long as her Life continues. Fancy her beloved in the tendereſt Manner by her Huſband, who, perhaps ignorantly to himſelf, is ſubject to ſome Defect of this kind, and fancy her revealing it to ſome Intimate, that Intimate to her Acquaintance, and they to all the World: Suppoſe the Huſband meeting every where with the Inſult of this Reproach, as coming from his Wife, and at the ſame time ſuppoſe that he thinks it feigned and pretended on her Part, remembering on his own that he is not only concealing from the World ſome real Imperfection of hers, but labouring

labouring to ſhut his Senſes againſt it. Her real Infidelity will be aggravated by the ſuppoſed Malice and Falſehood of the Aſperſion, and both by his own Goodneſs and Generoſity. The Conſequence is eaſily ſeen; he muſt deſpiſe and hate her. The preſent Peace of her Life is deſtroyed, and all Proſpect of future Happineſs is ſacrificed, and ſhe is either to be ſeparated from him for ever, or paſs a Life with him more intolerable, though leſs diſhonourable than the Separation.

I have drawn you the full Length, Child, of a moſt diſguſtful Picture; but you will underſtand it rightly. 'Tis fit you ſhould be acquainted with the worſt Conſequences that can attend the Faults of a married Behaviour, that, ſeeing to what little Things even theſe in their greateſt Extent may be owing, you may be, as you ought, upon your Guard againſt even the leaſt of them. Adieu, then; I am as weary as you can be

of ſo diſagreeable a Theme: Let us forget it; but never let us forget what may be its Occaſions.

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LETTER XII.

On the Government of the Thoughts.

I Have taken up a great deal of your Time, my deareſt ***, in cautioning you againſt the common Miſtake young Wives fall into, of making Confidants; and againſt entruſting theſe with what ought to be the moſt inviolable of all Secrets, the Defects or Imperfections, if there ſhould be any ſuch, of your Huſband. This, to the generality of Wives, would be all that the moſt tender Friend could think it neceſſary to mention; all that ſuch would need, or would be capable of guarding againſt; but, when I conſider that it is to you I write, I know I may ſay more. I have told you that it is imprudent

imprudent and ungrateful to Mention, even to your greateſt Favourite, the leaſt Defect or Imperfection, or any Thing that may ſeem but diſagreeable to you in the Perſon of your Huſband: This, my Dear is your Duty; but more is required of you by Reaſon, as I have already on ſeveral Occaſions ſaid to you, than is commanded by Duty. There are Ways of doing that which it is proper to do, and of letting alone that which is improper, which have in themſelves as much Merit as the very Act itſelf. It is concerning theſe that I have principally written to you: There are theſe delicate and tender Points in every Part of a married Life, and under every Circumſtance of it, on which not only the very greateſt Happineſs depends; but they even dictate the Manner as well as Neceſſity of the others.

A Conſideration of theſe has been the very occaſion and purpoſe of theſe Letters which I have written to you. They are, and the

reſt of them will be the ſame, rather on the Decorum, than immediately on the Duties of a married Life; and, as I have told you juſt now, the latter of theſe depends upon the former. Many grave Authors have written of the one; but none of them have touched upon the other. It is therefore that theſe Books appear uncouth and harſh, forbidding and diſagreeable. As Men of Senſe and of Religion they have been enabled to preſcribe the Rules; but they have no knowledge of the Manner in which they are to be obeyed. They have not been married; they are not Women; and believe me, my Dear, there is nothing beſide Experience that can give Leſſons upon ſo nice a Point. Thoſe who remember in what themſelves have ſucceeded, and in what they have failed; what has been the Occaſion of Happineſs to them, and what had like to have been an Occaſion of Miſery, can, by the Admonitions of that Remembrance, adviſe others how to obtain, and how to avoid, what they may hope, and

what

what they ought to fear. Think yourſelf happy, my deareſt ***, that you have the Advantage of ſuch an Experience; think nothing tedious or trifling that you meet with in theſe Letters: Thoſe who deſpiſe Trifles find themſelves deſtroyed by them. Be attentive to the Virtues and the Duties of that Condition into which you have thrown yourſelf, with very little Knowledge of it; you know their concern; but be as careful of the *Manner* in which you do them; for, without that, what is good may be ungraceful, and you may be unhappy, although you are virtuous.

I have told you that Faults in a Wife generally grow upon very ſlight Foundations, the worſt of them proceed from Things in themſelves trifling; but their Increaſe is certain. The Acorn is ſmall when it is planted in the Earth; but he muſt be very ignorant indeed who affects to wonder at the large Tree that grows from it. My Dear,

watch the firſt Motions of your Heart in Secret: Correct them if they are amiſs; encourage and continue them if they are good; for upon theſe all depend. They are the firſt ſhoots of every Flower that can adorn the Garden of Marriage, and of every Weed that can deform it. They may be rooted up with Eaſe when young, or they may be cheriſhed with a little Trouble, and all the future Proſpect will depend upon them.

I have cautioned you againſt revealing any Thing concerning the Imperfections of your Huſband: Let me now tell you that, if you are good and wiſe in the Degree that I expect to ſee you, and that I am perſuaded I ſhall ſee you, you will take Pains to conceal them not only from others, but even from yourſelf. I have told you what may ſerve as an Example: I have ſet before you the Conduct of a Huſband, perhaps your own; for I tell you that, without your knowing it,

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he may be concealing, ſo far as it is poſſible, even from himſelf, ſomething that is diſagreeable in you; and I have deſigned it as a Model for your own. Although it will be acting up to your Duty, my Dear, if you conceal from the World and keep within your own Breaſt ſuch Failings or Defects as you, and only you, may have Opportunities of diſcovering; yet a good Wife, nay, a wiſe one, if there were no more than that in it, will do more than her Duty: She will not content herſelf that her Conduct is unblameable, ſhe will endeavour to make it meritorious, and will lay a Claim to the Gratitude as well as the Acknowledgments of the Huſband's Heart, and to the Applauſe as well as the Approbation of her own.

You will do all this, my Dear; I know you would; and to purſue the Plan of my former Letter, let me inform you how this may be done, even under the leaſt advantageous Circumſtances. We will ſuppoſe your

your Huſband has ſome natural Infirmity or Failing in his Perſon, or in his Conſtitution, which according to the Admonition I have given you already, you would be very certain to keep from the Knowledge of all the World. There is yet a farther Step in your Power; you may keep it almoſt from your own. Theſe Things are in their own Nature but of little Conſequence; the Importance which they have they receive from the Manner in which we treat them. 'Tis in your Power, by employing your Thoughts for ever upon this Defect, whatſoever it be, to make it of the greateſt Conſequence: 'Tis in your Power alſo, by denying it that Regard, to reduce it almoſt to nothing. I am ſure I need not tell you, which of theſe is to be preferred. The Reſpect with which you treat your Huſband will be returned to yourſelf; and all the Merit to which you can arrive upon this Head, is its own Reward: Let this encourage you. It is of great Importance to your Huſband's Peace

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to appear well to the World; it is of yet greater to appear well to you: Let him not, while you have the Virtue to aſſure unto him the former, want the latter from your want of Affection.

Many Perſons have never diſcovered the moſt conſpicuous Imperfections in their deareſt and moſt intimate Friends, till ſome fooliſh and officious Perſon has named them; or if they had ſeen them at the beginning of an Acquaintance, length of Time, and Opportunity of obſerving Things much more worthy of Regard in the Perſon, have got the better of the unfavourable Impreſſion; and, till this ill-timed mention of them, they have never been obſerved, although perhaps afterwards never forgotten. The ill Office which theſe buſy People act by one another do not you, my Dear, to yourſelf. Guard your Mind againſt ſuch Thoughts, and the Object of them will be forgotten.

Shall I ſpeak to you from Experience of the moſt near kind. You remember your Uncle had a Defect in one of his Legs; it had been broken when he was an Infant, and ill ſet. When he firſt viſited me I never could keep my Eye from the Imperfection: Not good Nature, no, nor good Manners, could influence me to do what I ought; but believe me, when I was enough acquainted with him to ſee the Uprightneſs of his Heart, and Goodneſs of his Diſpoſition, I never ſaw the ſhape of this Limb afterwards. I was young, my Dear, as you are, and I remember I was in Danger from an Incident which I cannot remember without deſpiſing it moſt perfectly. Some officious Friend, after I had many Years forgotten it, ſaid, ſhe had often thought what pity it was there was ſuch a Blemiſh about a very agreeable Man. My Dear, I had more Pain to get over this ſecond Difficulty than the firſt. My Eye was again involuntarily caſt towards it, and I do aſſure you, the Peace of my

Life

Life was never ſo endangered as by this Accident.

The Inſtance I mention can be no exact Parallel to any Thing that concerns you; but what a buſy Friend did *for* me, or ſhall I ſay a buſy Enemy did *againſt* me in this Caſe, your own Thoughts may do, with regard to yourſelf on ſome like Occaſion. I am convinced that your Huſband has no Imperfection, Blemiſh or Defect about him, which can come within the Knowledge of any one except yourſelf: I dare ſay that he has none which can be known even to yourſelf; but I am giving *general*, and do not let them appear *particular*, Cautions. Although he had no ſuch Defect at the Time when you married, 'tis poſſible that it may happen afterwards. Sickneſs, or the very courſe of Time, or a thouſand Accidents, may occaſion it; and, being the Effect of theſe, and therefore the fault of Nature, not his own, you can have no Right to be diſ-

pleaſed

pleaſed with him for it. The ſame Accidents may alſo happen to you: therefore, remembering what you would expect on that Occaſion, do the ſame.

I have been all this Time endeavouring, upon the principles of Love, of Virtue, of Reaſon, and of Self-Intereſt, to eſtabliſh in you a Reſolution of ſeeing as little as poſſible any Thing in your Huſband which he wiſhes hid, or which, if he knew it, he would be inclined to wiſh hid. Be convinced, my Dear, and follow the Advice ſtrictly and cautiouſly. Whatever may be leaſt agreeable, for there is nothing diſagreeable, about his Perſon, think leaſt of it. It is your Duty, and your Intereſt to reſpect him, and you will find your Account in it. Shall I adviſe you freely? Conſider whether there be any Thing in your own Figure that is leſs pleaſing than the reſt of it: I own, my Dear, your Enemies would not be able to find this: but yet yourſelf, perhaps, on the moſt

moſt important Occaſion on which I adviſe you to make the Enquiry, may. Conſult your Glaſs, conſult yourſelf freely and impartially; if there be any Thing with which you can but remember that you was once diſpleaſed, before the Applauſe of others buried the Thought of it; recall this to your Memory, and doubt not but your Huſband has Eyes to it, although he purpoſely and good-naturedly ſhut them. Let this be your Reſource, and make his Conduct your Example. Whenever the miſchievous Recollection of ſomething, be it ever ſo little diſagreeable, or be it but imaginarily diſagreeable, in him, would force itſelf upon your Thoughts, turn them to this little Blemiſh of your own. It will anſwer a thouſand Purpoſes: It will inſpire Humility and Gratitude: It will tell you that you have no Right to that Opinion by which he repreſents you as perfect in his own Conſideration, and conſequently that it is an Act of Merit in him to do ſo. This Recollection will,

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on theſe Principles, my Dear, ſerve you on a double Account: Inſtead of your dwelling upon the Remembrance of what, though in itſelf a Trifle, might yet tend to render him diſagreeable to you, on your Affection for whom, your Peace and Happineſs depends; it will at once teach you to look with ſome Degree of Humility on yourſelf and with a new Reſpect on him: While it ſhews you in the ſame Light *your* Defects and *his* Perfections, it will be an Occaſion of your being moderate in your Opinion of your own Merit and warm in your Love to him.

Theſe are Conſiderations that may appear new to you, and the Advice poſſibly ſeem harſh; but you will reconcile yourſelf to it. I own that Vanity is a prevailing and pleaſing Paſſion with us; and that it is too frequently the principal one in the Female Heart; but 'tis a ſource of Miſchief, and does not obtain us that Reſpect which it demands of others, but their Contempt. 'Tis not to be encou-

raged:

raged: You will have Reaſon enough, my Dear, to find it is not: And this will be one of the moſt happy Methods on which it is poſſible for you to fall for the ſubduing it. When you think not ſo well of yourſelf as the World thinks of you, you enſure that good Opinion: When they diſcover that you think better, they withdraw it in proportion. I mention this, My Dear, as an accidental Advantage that will attend this ſtudied and becoming conſciouſneſs of any Defect in yourſelf; but the great Circumſtance is that, on which I founded the Obſervation. As your good Qualities are more the Concern of your Huſband than they are of the World, *his* Eyes will be more open than thoſe of the World to them.

And this will be your greateſt and moſt eſſential Happineſs. You will, by this Conduct, while you are reducing your Senſe of your own Merit into Bounds that

all People will call moderate, be raiſing your Ideas of your Huſband's Perfections. He will double his Senſe of all thoſe good Qualities in you, which you ſeem not to prize highly enough yourſelf: And he will love you for acknowledging Merit in him as much as if yourſelf poſſeſſed it.

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LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Of Conſent of Thought in the Affairs of Life.

I Congratulate with myſelf, as well as you, my deareſt ***, that I have gone through the moſt unpleaſing Part of my Advice to you. Whatever is diſagreeable to you in the reading, be aſſured, has been more ſo to me in the writing. But Medicines, however diſtaſteful to the Palate, are often neceſſary; and the Wiſe, will ſwallow them, by way of Prevention in Times of Danger. I am well convinced that all I have been writing in my two laſt Letters, concerns neither you nor your Huſband at this Time. I never ſuppoſed, or imagined, that it did; but I have told you that it may: And am happy that I have not left you unprovided againſt the moſt dangerous Attack that can be made upon the Felicity of the married Life; or unprepared to meet it be it ever ſo

ſudden; or what is much more dangerous, be it ever ſo ſubtle or ſo hidden an Attack. But we have done with it: And from the Conſideration of what *may* be neceſſary, let us paſs to the remainder of what certainly is ſo.

My Dear, beware of that common Error, that the Wife has no Buſineſs with her Huſband's Affairs. It has ruined the Peace of many, and the Proſperity of more Families. There can be no concern of Importance that is his, which is not equally yours. You have Underſtanding that may be uſeful to him in the Management of the moſt difficult and nice Events; he will wiſh to have a Friend with whom he can adviſe, to whom he can unburthen his Heart, and communicate his Sentiments on ſuch Occaſion. And who ſo proper as yourſelf? Take care that he may ſee none is ſo worthy of the Confidence.

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But in the avoiding one Fault, be careful, Child, that you don't run into another: Its common for the dread of one Extreme to drive People of weak Minds upon the Oppoſite; but this is not your Danger. There is not any Part of the Conduct of a Wife ſo eſſential as this: I am ſorry to ſay there is not any ſo difficult; but you have the Clue of Diſcretion which will lead you through all the Windings of the Labyrinth. Remember, my Dear, that a middle Conduct, between the Extremes of one Part and the other, is generally the right: It is in nothing ſo eſſential as in this: The Point at which you are to aim is the middle State between Neglect and Impertinence: The one is not more miſchievous than the other is troubleſome.

Remember, as an univerſal Rule, and have recourſe to it to try your Conduct upon all Occaſions, that your Intereſt and your Duty are to have a general Knowledge of the Af-

fairs of your Huſband; but not a particular one: The firſt is uſeful, the other is idle and unneceſſary: It would very ill become the Wife who did but affect the Character of a good one, not to know whether ſhe had one thouſand Pounds a Year, or five to live upon; but it would be a Blemiſh in the Character of the beſt, to be inquiſitive what Money her Huſband ſpent in his common Occaſions; or at what time every particular Tenant paid him.

I do not know a better Rule, after the firſt, than that you are always ready to be informed of whatever your Huſband thinks proper to communicate to you; and that you are never ſolicitous of knowing more. His Love to you will not ſuffer him to conceal any Thing of Moment from you, the knowing which can be of either the leaſt good or the leaſt pleaſure to you. If he keep from your Knowledge that which gives him Pain, and would give it you alſo unneceſſarily, it

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is more than Impertinence; it is Ingratitude to teize him to reveal it. His Love for you, as it will influence him to communicate all his real Concerns, ſo it will alſo plead with him to be careful of them. He who is happy with you will be careful that he continues ſo; and he will know that in explaining to you what are the real Circumſtances of his Affairs, he, at once, gives you a rational Aſſurance of the continuance of that Happineſs, and arms you againſt any little Temptation you might have to break in upon it.

I don't know whether it have been owing to a Backwardneſs in the Huſband to explain his Circumſtances, or to a Negligence in the Wife of attending to that Explanation; but wherever the Fault has lain, I have been witneſs to the Effect in many Families, the Ruin of thoſe who would otherwiſe have continued in Proſperity: And of this you may be aſſured, my Dear, that with the

Deſtruction of the Fortune in this Caſe, there always happens that of the Harmony, which alone could give them the means of enjoying it. Let me be very plain with you, for the Importance of the Occaſion requires and will juſtify it. I have ſeen among our own Relations, thoſe whom no other Incident could have hurt, made miſerable by this want of mutual Knowledge and mutual Confidence.

You will know whom I mean, without explaining myſelf further. I don't know whether the Huſband omitted to tell, or the Wife neglected to regard the Situation of their Affairs; but this you ſee, they lived at ten Times their Income, and they are ruined. I am afraid the Fault was too much hers, and therefore I produce the inſtance by way of cautioning you againſt it. This is the more deplorable, in that it happens the moſt naturally where the People love one another moſt; the Wife is giddy and runs into

into Expences ſuited to her Inclination, not to her Circumſtances; the Huſband is ſenſible of it, but he loves her too well to tell her ſhe is wrong: He can conſent to the Diſtreſs which he ſees in Proſpect, rather than intrude upon the immediate Pleaſures of the Woman whom he loves. What an Affliction muſt this be to her Breaſt afterward, to conſider that ſhe has involved not only herſelf, but the Man who doats on her, in Difficulties, and this becauſe he doated on her.

You have been happy, my Dear, in marrying a Man of ſuch a Fortune that it is not eaſy to be hurt; but as with Miſers the deſire of Money increaſes with the Sum of it, ſo with People of Pleaſure, and you are too young not to have a Taſte for that, the Love of Expence increaſes with the Means of it. Although it is not eaſy to ſuppoſe your Fortune could be hurt even by exceſſes, yet there is no Fortune but may be ruined; and

there

there are Exceſſes againſt which no Circumſtances can ſtand it long. I tell you in good Time, what poſſibly may, not what is likely to happen: But be guarded againſt it as much as if it were probable. It would be terrible to find occaſion of denying yourſelf many Things to which you had a natural Right, becauſe you had been idle enough to indulge in thoſe to which you had not; and it will be the more hard to be without theſe, becauſe you had enjoyed thoſe which were greater. Can there be a more aggravating Circumſtance? Yes, more than one, and you ſhall hear them, becauſe I know it is the only way by which you can be informed of them, and they will guard you againſt the very firſt and ſlighteſt Steps, towards what in others might end in complete Ruin. Would it not be a terrible Conſideration, in the midſt of the want of Things, which are in themſelves uſeful, to recollect that it is owing to the Indulgence in ſome other Article, which while you enjoyed it in the fulleſt

fulleſt Profuſion, was not only uſeleſs, but incapable of giving you Pleaſure: And to ſum up the Account with that which will more than all other Conſiderations, wound a tender and a generous Heart, whatever Affliction and Remorſe muſt attend the having involved in the Diſtreſs a worthy and an indulgent Huſband; who only fell into it becauſe he was too tender of your Peace, to check or ſtop you in the idleſt of your Extravagancies.

What muſt be the Affliction of that Woman (do not imagine, let me requeſt it of you, that I level every Conſideration at your immediate Circumſtances; that which I am about to Name can never become yours: But it is better to admoniſh you by parallel Inſtances, than to ſhock you with what are direct, and may be unneceſſary.) What I ſay, muſt be the Diſtreſs of that Woman who, after ten or twelve years Marriage, finds it impoſſible to ſupport a pair of Horſes

to

to her Coach, becauſe in the firſt half dozen Years ſhe would not be drawn by leſs than ſix: What of that fallen Grandeur, which becauſe at firſt it would eat only on Plate, cannot at laſt afford to ſup on China. But to return from generals, to what will intereſt and concern you in particular: My Dear, be cautious, but that is not all the Charge I have to give you; be circumſpect not only over your Actions and your Inclinations, but over the firſt and the leaſt Tendencies of your Thoughts toward Extravagance. 'Tis on the Regulation of theſe that all depends: I have told you, and I repeat it, that 'tis theſe which are the real Spring of the greateſt Things that can concern you, and therefore it is that I have been ſo careful in directing all my Advice and Admonition towards theſe. Do not imagine from what I am ſaying, that I have any Deſign to ſet you againſt the innocent and proper Enjoyments of Life, nay, not againſt its Indulgencies. There are a vaſt

many

many Things People of your Fortune may allow themſelves without being extravagant: Nay, 'tis hardly eaſy to ſay in general, ſetting aſide Play, what could deſerve the Name; but ſtill, my Dear, be careful, although nothing that you can immediately fall upon can well deſerve to be called Exceſs; yet Things which you can at the Extent of Prudence and Oeconomy, afford may, nay, and they will naturally lead you to thoſe which you cannot. Here is the Danger:— And you muſt guard againſt its firſt Approaches.

Be careful, my Dèar, how you enter on any new Article of Expence upon your own Opinion: Nor deſpiſe the Conſideration becauſe trifling in itſelf: 'Twill be the Road to what is important. I would have you ſtart at the leaſt Innovation in your Expence or Family. Two additional Servants lead the Way to twenty: The hiring a country Seat in a more convenient Situation,

will

will lead to the building one. Whatſoever is done of this kind, let it be your Huſband's Act, not yours. Not think it any Authority or Excuſe for you, that if it be your Propoſal he makes no Objections. His Affection to you may prevent his ſpeaking, even where his Reaſon would incline him to it: And what can be ſo ungrateful as to take ſuch Advantage of ſuch a Paſſion.

But this is not all, you are not only to have an Eye upon your own Conduct in this important Article, but on his. I need not tell you, my Dear, with how much Caution ſuch a piece of Advice is to be obeyed: But yet it is to be obeyed. You cannot be too ſevere in your Examination of your own Conduct on this head; and you cannot be too reſerved and delicate in that of your Huſband.

I have told you that his Affection for you may prevent him from pointing out to you, even

even in the gentleſt Manner, Errors in your Conduct: The ſame Affection may blind him alſo to Errors in his own, when they are ſuch as lead to Things that will give you greater Pleaſure. In this Caſe, ſurely, the Affection, which ought on your Part to be in equal Meaſure with his own, will direct you to ſee for him, and although your own Intereſt or your own Indulgence is concerned, it will influence you to ſpeak againſt them. There cannot be in any Thing ſo much Premeditation neceſſary as in the ſpeaking on ſuch an Occaſion: Yet of all other Opportunities, the Occaſion you will have of doing it on theſe Terms will be the moſt favourable, and will take off the moſt of that Reſtraint. I need not tell you that the Language of a Wife on ſuch a Subject, is to be that of Apology, a fear of diſobliging, and a conſciouſneſs that it is eaſy for her to be miſtaken: But with all this there may be Room for Reaſon. And when her Huſband ſees that her Love is the

Source

Source of her Care, and diſcovers that Care to be employed againſt herſelf, not in favour of any Thing that might give her Pleaſure, he will not only liſten, and be indulgent to the Preſumption of the Advice, tho' it ought not to wear the full Force of Advice neither: He will love the Perſon who ſees his Intereſt and her own to be the ſame; and who, in that Conſideration, cannot only decline, but fear the Appearance of what ſeems to give her but the Preference.

Here, my Dear, is an Article, under which there appears a Method of making that which is the moſt offenſive, and the moſt dangerous of all the Duties of a Wife, pleaſing and meritorious. 'Tis ſo in many other Particulars when they are rightly ſtudied. The prudent Wife will not only avoid the common Occaſions of Offence, but ſhe will make thoſe Things her Advantage, which to another are moſt fatal.

You

You will perhaps ſee ſome Occaſion in which not your own Concerns but his, are leading to Extravagance: You will ſee that not his Indulgence to you, but his Propenſity to Racing, or to any other of the faſhionable Follies of the great, is the object of your Danger: This is a much more difficult taſk for you than the former; but the Duty increaſes with the difficulty; and the more Danger may attend the Attempt, the more Caution is neceſſary in the making it; but there is no Plea for declining it.

You will know that 'tis very tenderly, ſuch a Thing can be mentioned to him: You will know, that to provoke him, is to render him reſolute and obſtinate; chuſe a proper Moment: Be not raſh even in the Reſolution, much leſs in the executing it. Wait to deliberate, and be firſt certain that it is neceſſary you ſhould ſpeak; then be careful that you ſpeak in a proper Time, and that you do it with proper Reſpect and

Caution. Hint your meaning firſt in remote Terms. Speak of others who have fallen into the Folly, without ſeeming to think him in any Danger of it. If he receive this with Temper, you are ſure to ſucceed, perſiſt; but let not the Proſpect of ſucceſs make you raſh: Nor ſuffer his Willingneſs to liſten to you, when you ſpeak as you ought, to encourage you to expect the ſame favourable Attention to Things that you ought not to ſay. Remember that it has been to the remote Manner in which you named this Matter that you owe the happy Conſequences of your having named it, and to continue them, purſue the ſame plan. Never let it ſeem to have entered into your Imagination that he was in Danger, but urge from Time to Time new inſtances of the Weakneſs of engaging in ſuch Attempts, and of the Ruin that has attended the doing ſo, he will be won perfectly: He will not only pay the more Attention to your Reaſons, for the diſtant Manner of your urging them,

but

but he will, on the Principle I have been inculcating, throughout the preceding Letter, love you for the Virtue of trying, even while you were uneaſy at his Weakneſſes, to ſhut your Eyes upon them; and even, to be ignorant of them while you adviſed againſt them.

A Conqueſt of this kind, my Dear, will give you more ſolid, and more rational Pleaſure, than any of your celebrated Beauties ever felt from all their imaginary Victories; and you will have a Right to pride yourſelf upon it. 'Tis not this Circumſtance alone, the cautious Behaviour I have named will be of uſe to you. What is in this Manner delivered as particular, will ſerve as general Admonition; and tho' you never ſhould have this exact Occaſion to employ it, yet keep it in your Mind for others. Truth, is Truth for ever, and on all Occaſions; and that Behaviour which is right in

one Circumſtance, will ſhew you what is alſo proper in another.

I have told you how you are to continue your Behaviour if the firſt Step ſucceed; and 'tis ten thouſand to one that it will do ſo. There yet remains, however, to conſider what would be your proper conduct if it ſhould fail: This is a more difficult part in the Execution, but not in the Determination: Fewer Words will deliver it; and tho' it be not eaſy, you muſt remember, my Dear, that it is neceſſary you ſhould practiſe it. If on the firſt remote Hint he become diſpleaſed: If he hear you unwillingly; if he try to ſhift the Subject; or if he be abſolutely peeviſh, give it up entirely. I don't ſay, my Dear, that you are to give it up for ever, but for that Time entirely. Be aſſured he is either devoted to the Miſchief paſt all reclaiming; tho' that would be the laſt Thing to ſuſpect, or elſe he is involved ſo deeply in the preſent Scheme, that 'tis impoſſible

impoſſible for him to get back if he ever ſo much wiſh it. This is much more likely to be the Caſe, and I need not ſay how much it is the happier: In this ſituation you will have nothing to do but to wait with Patience for the Event, and to pray that it may be unfortunate to him in the immediate Chance.

Few who ſit down to Play, or who engage themſelves in any ſpecies of Gaming, know what is the Conſequence of the firſt Deciſion: To win is often to be undone: To loſe is the ſingle Means of their Security. Be not uneaſy at the Sum that depends on the firſt Bett: Enquire not after it; and if you come by Accident to the Knowledge, let it not give you concern that it is conſiderable. In your Hope that he will loſe, the larger it is the better, becauſe it will the more deter him from repeating the Hazard. Men are all backward in this dangerous Folly at the firſt; 'tis only Cuſ-

tom that familiariſes them; and he who is thoroughly chagrined at the firſt Loſs, will not continue it into a Cuſtom.

Altho' I would have you of all Things avoid meddling in your Huſband's private Concerns, or enquiring into thoſe trifling Affairs which he may wiſh to have remain a Secret; yet this is far from a trivial Concern, and it will juſtify your Curioſity. I mean, that it will juſtify it to yourſelf, for nothing can do ſo to him. Therefore altho' 'tis neceſſary to enquire, it is as neceſſary and as important to you to do this in ſuch a Manner that he may not diſcover you are enquiring. It will not be difficult for you to know the particular Subject on which he is intereſted: And it will be leſs difficult to know when and how that will be decided.

I have cautioned you, my deareſt ***, and no Caution can be too ſtrict upon ſo material

material a Point, to be ſilent in your Remonſtrances, let them have been ever ſo remote, as ſoon as you have found that he is averſe to hear them: But when you have watched this Time, you may and you muſt ſpeak again. I do not tell you there can be too much Tenderneſs in the Manner, or too many Conſiderations as to the bringing this about; but ſtill it muſt be done. I ſhall not blame you for trembling at the Thought of ſpeaking to him upon a Subject, on which he has already ſhewn himſelf ſo apt to take Offence: But ſtill it muſt be ſpoken of. Remember for your Comfort in the Taſk, that the Circumſtances are now altered; and there are many Things that may be ſaid, and may be done too, without Offence, under particular Opportunities, that can by no means be attempted prudently at others.

I have told you that ſuppoſing him averſe to hear you at the firſt; 'Tis probable it was becauſe he was engaged too firmly to go

back, and in that Situation even Things which he knew to be right would only teiſe him. 'Tis now otherwiſe, the Deciſion is made, and he is perfectly free from thoſe Engagements. But the Criſis is yet more important: Happy it is for you that he will hear you with more Temper. He is now at the point of Time in which he will either devote himſelf for Life, to the moſt deſtructive of all Purſuits, or he will forſake it altogether. Your Buſineſs is plain, and you will have your Leſſon into what form you are to throw your Arguments. You will know whether he has loſt or won. If he have won, your point is to lay before him the Danger he has eſcaped, not in its immediate but remote Conſequences; and you can no way do this ſo well as by the inſtance of ſome once happy Family whom you have known ruined and deſtroyed by it. Point the Advantage to him as nothing: for it truly is nothing; and ſet before him, tho' in diſtant Terms, the Folly of engaging in

a Game

a Game in which all that can be won can be of no uſe, cannot be wanted, nor can be worth the accepting; when what may be loſt in the Chance may prove a Subject of Inquietude. Theſe are Reaſons which will not fail to have occurr'd in a Man's own Thoughts, but he will pay a new Regard to them when they are offered from another, and the more ſo, as they will come from a Perſon whom he loves. He will be pleaſed with an Opportunity of doing that which he knows to be right and important; and at the ſame time obliging you; and you will at once have gained your Point, and have added to the greateſt of all Treaſures, to the Store of his Eſteem and Affection. This, my Dear, would probably be the Caſe, had you occaſion to preſs the proper Thought upon a Huſband who had begun by winning, but it will be yet an eaſier Taſk if he have loſt. You had in the other a ſucceſsful Folly to combat, but you have in this Caſe only to baffle one that has already puniſhed itſelf;

and

and that the Mind, which had encouraged it, is naturally ſick of. Yet, my Dear, the eaſieſt Duty becomes eaſier, when we ſet about it on the proper Foundation, and in the proper Manner.

In the other Caſe, I have adviſed you to uſe remote and diſtant Hints, and to name the whole Matter as if it concerned ſome other, not himſelf. In this I am of another Opinion: There was Prudence in a pretended Ignorance then, becauſe your Knowledge of every Event, could have anſwered no good purpoſe: In this there may be a Merit made of that very Knowledge, and therefore I would not wiſh you to diſguiſe it. You would be very wrong to give him leave to think, you had enquired after the nature or the event of his Engagements. Men of Honour do not theſe Things in ſecret; nor among People of Fortune is there much Care taken to make Secrets of them. There muſt have been Witneſſes to the Bett. They may

may be ſuppoſed to have named it among their Acquaintance, thoſe to theirs; and in this Manner it will appear very natural that you have heard of the Affair, and of its Conſequence; tell him you have, tell him of it freely; and without ſhewing the leaſt Diſcompoſure, tell him you are glad he has loſt. Add, that you ſhall never ſuppoſe you have any Right to meddle in his Engagement, but that as Play is the laſt Thing you ſhould ſuppoſe him capable of falling into, you are very glad that when ſome Accident had led him into the Precincts of it, the firſt Stake was to his Diſadvantage.

The diſintereſted Turn which you affect in this will give you Credit with him; and the Pleaſantry and good Humour with which you purſue the Diſcourſe, will obtain you a favourable hearing: He will be pleaſed to hear you rallying a Folly of which himſelf is ſick at that Moment. You will have an Opportunity of preſſing upon him in this free

free Manner, all the Arguments I have pointed out to you before, as what might have been of Force with others, but are unneceſſary to him. He will receive them all with a thorough Good-will: He will admire your Diſcernment, and he will love your Prudence; and theſe Thoughts coming together upon him at a Time when he is open to Conviction, and at the ſingle Moment in which Conviction itſelf could take any hold upon him, he will acknowledge all their Force, and he will put in practice all their Admonitions.

And it is thus, my Dear, that the moſt dangerous Things are conquered: when they are oppoſed in Time, the ſlighteſt Attacks prevail againſt them; when they are neglected, the ſtrongeſt are ineffectual. Purſue the Plan in every part of your Life. 'Tis not only this Danger that may be ſet aſide by timely Prudence, and by cautious Endeavours; with a Man of good Senſe,

and

and good Diſpoſition, of which your Huſband is poſſeſſed, there is nothing but may. Keep it in your Mind, that you neglect not, nor ever poſtpone the ſpeaking what it is proper you ſhould ſay, and you will ſeldom ſpeak in vain.

* * *

LETTER XIV.

On the general Behaviour and Deportment.

AFTER writing to you of ſo many Things, and ſo largely too, you are ready to ſuppoſe that I have done: Alas, my Dear, the moſt immediately neceſſary Part of what I have to ſay to you, is not yet begun. I have prepared for it in all this, and no Pre-

paration

paration could be too much, ſince it is not only the moſt eſſential Part that is to come, but it is alſo that on which it is both moſt difficult for *me* to ſpeak, and for *you* to hear.

You have read in my ſeveral Letters to you, what I have been taught by Experience, to be not only the ſeveral particular Duties of a Wife, but the Manner in which each of them is to be performed moſt to your Satisfaction, and to your Advantage. But ſtill this holds only with regard to Particulars; there is a general Conduct neceſſary. I have endeavoured to extend the Thought from all theſe into that larger Conſideration, but ſtill theſe Opportunities ſuffered me to do it very imperfectly. Give me leave now that you have ſeen the Neceſſity of it, and that I have in ſome Degree prepared your Mind for it, to enter on it fully. It is *more* neceſſary to you than all the reſt; nay, poſſibly, it may be the *only* Conſideration neceſſary. What I have

hitherto

hitherto ſaid to you concerning particular Occaſions, relates principally to Particulars; many of which may not, a great Part of them, I am perſuaded, will not occur. But ſtill there is a general Deportment neceſſary to be ſtudied, ſince that muſt have its Uſe, and is called in on all Occaſions; if what I have already explained be favourably implanted in your Mind, as I have no Reaſon to doubt but it is, you will receive the reſt favourably.

The Foundation of all lies, my Dear, in this, that there is a *real* Superiority in the Huſband; the Laws of God and Man, eſtabliſh this, and you muſt join with all Woman-kind in ſubſcribing to it: To do this happily, is to do it readily; where it comes with Reluctance it is always painful, and it is never perfect. I am ſenſible that we have natural Pride, and the Men are to blame in that they ſupport and encourage it in our Hearts. What can be ſo wrong, as

for

for thoſe to place themſelves in the Condition of our Slaves, who know that after the repeating a few Words, they ſhall be viewed as our Lords and Maſters. They are mean who take any great Advantage of the Cuſtom; but my Dear, the beſt and moſt indulgent of them will keep up the Prerogative, even yours will not refuſe himſelf the conſciouſneſs of it.

To reconcile yourſelf to it, for with any newly married Woman, it goes againſt the Inclination, conſider that it is in Nature, and that the Law of God ordains it. We are weak and uſeleſs to the World, they are our ſupport and our defence, and to their Prudence, as well as their Strength, are owing our Security, and all the advantages of Society. This will demand ſomething from us, and that not only Gratitude, but ſome degree of Subjection; beſides, Reaſon is in this authoriſed by Cuſtom, and that not of one Country, or one Time, but of all the World,

and

and of all Ages; and this Cuſtom is ratified by Law in all Places. I am ſenſible it will be eaſy to object that Men make Laws, and that they will therefore be ſure to make them in their own Favour. Be not carried away, my Dear, with ſuch light Opinions; there are Laws not of Man's making, but of God's, and theſe, as the others, ſupport and authoriſe his Superiority on their ſide. I thank Heaven, that your Education has not been among thoſe who ſuppoſe it a Scandal to be good; or that they are to diſregard their Bible, becauſe it is the Word of their Creator. This Book, which is not, like others, capable of Error, gives you the Hiſtory of a People who did not make their own Laws, but for whom the Creator of the World by his own Voice ſpoke and eſtabliſhed them. You find theſe People for a long courſe of Time under the immediate Government and Direction of God, and in all that Time you will find the Wife obedient to her Huſband, and treating him

tho' as her Friend and her Companion, yet alſo as her Superior. The common Title under which the *Hebrew* Wives addreſſed their Huſbands, and under which they ſpoke of them in their Abſence; for theſe People ſpoke alike before their Faces and behind their Backs, was, *my Lord:* Among the greateſt People, and among the leaſt, in the moſt poliſhed, and in the moſt barbarous Climates, ſtill this has been preſerved, and what has been thus ordained both by God and Man, what has been agreed to, and complied with in all Places, and by all People, do not you, my Dear, think it hard to conſent to. It is the Cuſtom of all the World, and it is the Cuſtom of your own Country, at leaſt it is ſo of the wiſe and virtuous Women of it; and theſe, I hope, are thoſe whom you would follow. *England*, perhaps, is of all the Earth the Place where the Huſband builds leaſt upon this Prerogative, where he feels leaſt of his Superiority, and uſes leaſt Authority over his Wife: think

think it happy that you are born in ſo fortunate a Kingdom, but do not take the leaſt Step toward carrying that Indulgence, which its Cuſtoms give you, too far: This would be not only Weakneſs but Ingratitude.

I ſhall not deny but that we have too many Examples of thoſe who do it; and it is therefore I am the more earneſt in adviſing you to avoid it. Example in ill is no Authority; nor would you be at all the leſs faulty, becauſe ten thouſand People were faulty with you. You will ſee an Appearance of Freedom and Independence in theſe unworthy Wives, which carries a tempting look with it, but this is all Appearance. A ſad Heart lurks beneath theſe ſmiles upon the Countenance, and the pretence of Happineſs being all that is in their Power, they will make the moſt of that poor Advantage; but ſuppoſe all this Freedom real, is it worth while, my Dear, to purchaſe it at the Expence of your Peace, and of your Huſ-

band's Love; for that is the ſure Price that muſt be paid for it: Surely, it is not. A gay Face Abroad, is but a poor Reward for a heavy Heart at Home, and which in the End is the loſs of all this Freedom, all this Independence. You will loſe Money uncontrouled by him; but you are ſtill within the controul of your own Income; that ſeparate Income which is the ſource of all this Folly, and of all this Miſery. You can be late abroad; alas! Is this a Pleaſure? You love your Huſband; and you will always love him, becauſe he, I am perſuaded, will always deſerve it: You will therefore find your Home a Place of greater Pleaſure than all theſe Rendezvous. You can receive, too, the Civilities of Strangers. But believe me, tho' you can you ought not. Not that I would ſuppoſe them tending to any Thing guilty, and therefore I ſay nothing of the ſerious Thoughts that might occur on the Occaſion, but be they ever ſo unmeaning, they are ſtill liable to Miſconſtruction; and they

they are even ſcandalous with the Man whom you regard not; while they would be a Virtue directed to the Man you loved. Be aſſured, my Dear, that theſe, idle and weak as they are, are yet the three great Sources of that hate to Superiority which poſſeſs the female Heart. When a Huſband is conſidered as a Superior, it is not the Fault, but the Dependance that is connected with it, that ruins all: And yet, we ſee, Ruin is the almoſt certain attendant upon the ſhaking off that Dependance. If you could be inclined to envy the preſent Situation of theſe free Wives, theſe libertine Wives, let me call them (for very few of them deſerve a better Name) look into the future Period of it, and you will be weaned from the Fondneſs with which the preſent might inſpire you. If it appear uncertain to look into the future, conſider the Condition of thoſe who have been like them, what is it but Contempt, and a Contempt that will ſting to the Heart, becauſe it is deſerved. It is not only the

neglect and diſregard of all good People, but even of thoſe who are as faulty as themſelves; her neareſt Relations are ſhy of her; her very Intimates, in a former Period, aſhamed of her. The Malice of the World has, perhaps, encreaſed Appearance only, into Guilt, and thoſe who have Reputations will be afraid of ſullying them by her Acquaintance; thoſe who do not deſerve any, will not expoſe their ſlender Pretenſions, by countenancing one who is ſuſpected. They who themſelves want Protection, are not only the laſt that can, but they are the laſt that will give it; and be aſſured in the ſame Manner, that thoſe who want will be the laſt that will obtain it.

Let not Appearances deceive you; be aſſured that the Regard of others follows that of your Huſband with equal Steps. When he thinks meanly of his Wife, the World will not long think well of her. They know he is the beſt Judge of what Conſideration

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ſhe truly deſerves; they know that he is intereſted to think well of her, becauſe his own Character depends in ſome Degree on hers: They know he will ſupport her Reputation as long as he can with Juſtice and Truth, or but with any tolerable Appearance of them: and they are always ready to conſtrue Things to ill: They will ſuppoſe he muſt have more Reaſons than they know of for his Diſreſpect: They will ſuppoſe theſe the worſt that are poſſible; and judging upon that Suppoſition as if it were an eſtabliſhed and certain Truth, they will condemn as if they had Evidence.

All this, my Dear, depends upon the original Principle, where I have placed its Root, and from whence I have deduced it. Your Huſband will expect you to retain a Senſe of his Superiority, and he has a Right to expect it. The leſs he aſſumes, the more will be your Merit in allowing it, and the more Pleaſure will he have in ſeeing that

you do ſo. The profeſſing this is fulſome; but the keeping it in Remembrance is of the firſt Utility. Your Actions, my Dear, and not your Words, are to convince him that you have a due Senſe of this Diſtinction; and theſe are an eaſier Teſtimony than the other. While he ſees that you regard him in this Light, he will know that you'll pay a Reſpect to his Advice; he will therefore think your Conduct right, becauſe he will always find it conformable to his Opinions; and he will therefore juſtify it in every Step, both to his own Ear, and to that of the World.

I know this would be an uneaſy, and an hard Taſk, were you married to an obſtinate, or to a churliſh Huſband; nay, it would be unjuſt to impoſe it, were you married to a weak one; but I conſider myſelf writing to the virtuous and prudent Wife of the beſt natured Man in the World, and of one who will not miſlead her. After all,

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my Dear, harſh and ungrateful as this Doctrine of Superiority in an Huſband ſeems in the Name, is there any great Matter in it, to a Woman of Underſtanding? and ſuch it muſt be allowed you are, altho' your Years have afforded no great Experience; ſurely no! 'Tis only in the Name it ſeems difficult or diſhonourable to our Sex. Certainly, in this Senſe (and be aſſured that future Years will ſhew you, in the Lives of yourſelves and of others, that this is the true Senſe of the Duty) far from demeaning, ſhe honours herſelf who ſubmits to it freely and fully: She does Honour to herſelf in the very Action, more than to her Huſband, ſince it is much more to act up to ones Duty, than to ſee that done by another. Peace, and Happineſs, and Reputation, are the aſſured Conſequences of it; and are not theſe worth the obtaining? On the other Part, let us conſider one, whoſe Pride, or Folly, ſetting her above herſelf, and above the World, urge her to refuſe it:

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What is the Act, and what are its Conſequences; in denying the Duty ſhe wrongs no one but herſelf, and herſelf alone feels the ill Conſequences. Her Huſband deſpiſes her, and the Contempt of the World follows. I am ſorry to add to this, nor need I add it to you, my Dear, for you will not come into this dangerous Situation, nor, if you could, would it follow: But altho' I grieve and bluſh to name it, it is too true, that abſolute Guilt is often the Conſequence; and that this is nothing leſs than the great Root from which it generally ſprings. There may be Women naturally vicious, but this can be no common Caſe; the many are led to it by this Occaſion. The Huſband diſregards, the Stranger ſolicits; the World denies her Reputation, and ſhe alas! forfeits her Claim to it. It appears much the ſame to her to be criminal, and be cenſured and deſpiſed, as to be cenſured and deſpiſed without being criminal; and finding herſelf on the Precipice, ſhe plunges into the Ocean

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of Deſtruction. You ſee, Child, of what Conſequence, what univerſal Importance it is to you, to preſerve the good Opinion of your Huſband. 'Tis not only that this is the Foundation of Eſteem, and that Eſteem the rational and ſure Baſis of Love, but your Reputation, as well as your Happineſs depends upon it. It is the Diſpoſer of all your public, as well as your private Concerns, and all is linked to it: To be reckoned virtuous, we muſt firſt be allowed innocent, and in the ſame Manner, to be allowed Merit, we muſt firſt do our Duty; to do it, we muſt know it; and this not ſo eaſy as it may appear to inconſiderate Minds. Perhaps you would have ſcarce imagined that ſo much as I have been relating to you, depended upon your retaining a Senſe of your Huſband's natural and juſt Superiority. Perhaps you at firſt queſtioned my Judgment and my Candour, in placing it before you, as a Conſideration of ſuch Neceſſity. I have ſhewn you its Conſequences, and nothing

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can be more weighty. You will ſee as I have placed them, that all theſe depend upon your Breach, or your obſervance of that, and you will in Conſideration of theſe find the natural Diſagreeableneſs of the Taſk nothing. Why ſhould we ſuppoſe ourſelves placed above all Things in the World? Why ſhould we ſuppoſe ourſelves equal to the higheſt? Certainly, my Dear, we are not ſo: And if we are to acknowledge Superiority any where, why is it not as eaſy, why is it not more eligible to own it where there is moſt Love to temper it, and where the Advantages are all, and the Honour is in a very great Meaſure our own? I know, my Dear, that I have written upon a Subject which will appear a rough one: I hope I have made it ſmoother than it was: I am ſure I have done what to a reaſonable Mind will have as much Effect; I have convinced you of its Neceſſity.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

On Conformity of Tempers.

IF it appeared to you, my Dear, that my laſt Letter was upon a Subject of great Difficulty, you will ſay this has for its purpoſe the recommending an Impoſſibility, but you are miſtaken: The firſt was only hard at the Appearance; and this only ſeems impoſſible. You know I ſet out in theſe Letters with telling you that if you would be happy, it muſt be on the principles of your own Judgment, not of that of other People's: and that it was incumbent upon you to pay the due Regard to your own Opinion. Nothing is ſo common as are the eſtabliſhed Sentiments of the World, but nothing is ſo falſe. Fools are guided by them, and they are their Deſtruction: Be you wiſe, my Dear, that you may be happy.

It is the Cuſtom of your Sex to ſuppoſe the

the Superiority of an Huſband impoſed by Tyranny, and mean in the Obſervance. I have ſhewn you that it has its origin in Reaſon, in Juſtice, in Nature, and in the Law of God: And I have pointed out to you the Conſiderations under which you ſee it, honourable in the Acknowledgment, and eaſy in the Practice. The Taſk I have now to impoſe on you appears yet more difficult: you may call it romantic; but it is natural, it is eaſy, it will ſucceed, and there will be pleaſure in the Exerciſe of it, and the greateſt Advantages in the End.

There is not a more common Obſervation than that People's Tempers are unalterable, and that when they are unlike, there is nothing but Uneaſineſs in the Union. They will ſay that it is as eaſy to alter a Perſon's Face as Diſpoſition; and they ſay right: But when they make that an Example of Impoſſibility, they are ſtrangely miſtaken. What is ſo common as for married Perſons

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to be miſtaken for Brother and Siſter? What is ſo common an Obſervation as that ſuch a Man is very like his Wife, or ſuch a Woman is the Picture of her Huſband. Let me explain this to you. I have heard a very ſenſible Man, your Uncle, reſolve it into a very odd Principle, for ſuch an Occaſion; into the Satisfaction which all People have in their own Form: but this, though ingenious enough, is erroneous. He obſerved that the beſt Face became better, and the worſt more tolerable by Acquaintance: I have told you that I ſoon look'd away an Imperfection in the Limbs of a Perſon to whom I was accuſtomed; and 'tis as eaſy to ſoften or obliterate any Blemiſh in the Face of another, or even to convert Things, in themſelves indifferent, into Beauties: If we can do this, by a long Acquaintance with the Faces of others, much more may we arrive at it with the longer Acquaintance with our own. All its Faults, depend upon it, my Dear, die away before the frequent

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view of it in the Glaſs, all its indifferent Parts are raiſed into Beauties, and all its real Beauties become vaſtly greater. You will wonder whither I am wandering; but I ſhall come back with the more Strength to the Purpoſe with which I am ſet out. It is owing to this Deceit, which is the Child of Familiarity, that we all fancy ourſelves handſomer than we really are; or to give it a gentler Term, we think ourſelves more agreeable than other People think us: Do not be hurt by it, Child; but, depend upon it, there is Nobody that thinks even you ſo handſome as you think yourſelf. What we ſuppoſe agreeable in our own Faces, we naturally think ſo too in thoſe of other People. What pleaſes us in ourſelves, pleaſes us alſo in them; and 'tis hence that your Uncle derived the common Likeneſſes between Men and their Wives. He ſuppoſed that a Woman, among a Multitude of Faces that had equal Claim to her Attention, was moſt pleaſed with that which was moſt like

like her own; or in other Words, thought that to be moſt agreeable which approached moſt to the Idea that ſhe had affixed in her own Mind to the Word agreeable. If we ſuppoſe, ſays he, that the ſame Rule of thinking holds good with regard to the Men, and there is no Reaſon to doubt it, we ſhall find it moſt natural that People who are alike in the Face ſhould marry.

I have obſerved that there was ſomething ingenious in this Syſtem, but it is groundleſs. Neither Man nor Woman are ſo far biaſed by Partiality to themſelves as he would repreſent; nor are Matches in general made in this Manner. I don't think there is much Room to glory in it on either Side; but it is certain that Accidents, and thoſe the moſt trivial in the World, often throw People in the Way of one another. A Man happens to be at *this* Ridotto, or he is invited to *that* Rout: Chance, as abſolute Chance as his own, brings a Woman to the ſame Place,

whoſe Face, whoſe Air, or whoſe Converſation pleaſes him; or oftener than all theſe, whom ſome little Accident throws in his Way for Converſation. I have been told of a Match, greatly to the Advantage of the Lady, that aroſe from her Advice how to play a Hand at Whiſt; and one of the luckieſt on the Man's Part, that this Age has produced, was owing to his treading on a Lady's Toe in an Aſſembly.

Such Accidents as theſe put People in one another's Way, who are afterwards pleaſed with each other's Qualifications; and what was nothing in the firſt Step, advances into Marriage, and the making of Families and Fortunes. There is nothing in all this that regards the Form or Figure; nay, 'tis juſt otherwiſe; you oftener obſerve it otherwiſe: See the blackeſt Men married to the faireſt Women; the biggeſt to the leaſt: This ſpeaks againſt the Prejudice in Favour of what is moſt like ourſelves; but yet,

yet, whatever may be the Caſe with thoſe who are courting, 'tis evidently the Truth, that very many are alike who are married. Nay, that this Reſemblance, which was not at all ſeen before, is taken Notice of by every Body afterwards.

I ſhall explain it to you, my Dear, and this long Digreſſion from my Point will make extremely for my Purpoſe. 'Tis not that People grow larger or ſmaller in their Size, or that their Features alter their Shape, Proportion, or Dimenſions upon Marriage, for that is impoſſible; but this is the Source of the Obſervation. There is ſomething in the Face, that contributes more to a Likeneſs, than Features or Complection; and this is in our Power: 'Tis what we call the Air and Manner of the Face; and is, if you will know it truly, the Character of the Mind expreſſing itſelf in the Countenance: This is that Air and Look which is more peculiar than any Set of Features can

be; and is more ſtriking, more pleaſing, or more diſtaſteful; and which, as it does not depend upon any Thing external may be acquired.

You have read of Phyſiognomiſts, Perſons who could tell People's Temper, Character and Diſpoſition, by the Lines of their Faces; nay more, could foretel the Fortune of their ſucceeding Lives, by the ſame Obſervation. And even this, though carried too far by the Artful, and believed too firmly by the Credulous, is not without Foundation in Nature and Reaſon. 'Tis the Temper which give this Air to the Face, Nature beſtows the Features, but this communicates the Manner; 'tis, in reality, the Soul ſpeaking in the Aſpect: And as the Temper always depends upon the Paſſions; and the future Events of Life too much alſo upon our Management of them, 'tis not a Wonder that all this may be diſcovered in the Countenance.

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As this Air and Manner is not a fixed Thing, like the Features, it may be liable to Changes; and I have known them. They do not happen often, and they are long in bringing about; but when they are fixed, they are as viſible in their Effects as thoſe of which they have taken the Place. I have ſeen a very agreeable Woman become ugly by a Change of this Kind, without the Aſſiſtance of Age or the ſmall-Pox; and I could, at this Time, point you out one of the plaineſt Women of your Acquaintance, whom almoſt every Body is in Love with, merely for a Change of this Kind.

You will ſee at what I have been labouring in all this: It is to tell you that the Air of a Face may be changed, and that of another acquired. 'Tis thus between the Huſband and the Wife moſt frequently: 'Tis thus they become like one another after a Time, altho' they had not the leaſt Reſemblance when they met. If they mutually

love, they will be often looking upon one another; and eſteeming what they love, they will be imitating it. From this they will by Degrees, acquire each ſo much of the other's Temper and Manner, that their Countenances will have the ſame Expreſſion: Any one of them, by a thorough Affection and Regard for the other, might have come to this natural Likeneſs in Length of Time; but when the Advances are on both Sides they quickly meet.

This, my Dear, is my Syſtem for explaining that frequent Likeneſs which we ſee between Men and their Wives; and I think it much more rational than that wild Scheme of Chance on which ſome People would throw it, or that diſhonourable Imagination of ſelf-Love and ſelf-Admiration, which is the Source of it, according to others. You will ſay, do you not remember, Madam, that you ſet out with a Deſign of giving me your Advice

vice about bringing us to a Conformity of Temper? I have told you how you may, and how People who are married do get a Likeneſs of Countenance; and in that I have done it. You will underſtand me, my Dear, that by often looking at your Huſband's Face, by ſmiling on the Occaſions on which he ſmiles, by frowning on thoſe Things which make him frown, and by viewing all Things in the Light in which you ſee he views them, you will acquire that Likeneſs of Countenance which it is an Honour to poſſeſs, becauſe it is a Teſtimony of Love; and, my deareſt ***, when you have arrived at this, you will have effected that, which on my firſt naming it to you, ſeemed an Impoſſibility: you will have arrived at that Conformity of Temper, on which ſo very great a Portion of married Happineſs depends.

LETTER XVI.

On Conformity of Sentiments.

MY Dear, I have ſhewn you of what infinite Importance a Conformity of Temper is to thoſe who are to be happy in an exact Proportion to the mutual Agreement of their Diſpoſitions; but there is yet a greater and a nobler Field for the purſuing this Reſemblance; and while the Glory, the Pleaſure, and the Advantages attending on it, are infinitely greater than thoſe were that reſulted from the other, the Means are eaſier.

Conformity of Temper is no more than the Reſemblance in a fanciful and idle Part of our Compoſition: 'Tis directed often by Whim; and is ſometimes influenced even by the Body: But there is a higher Point of Reſemblance, that of the Soul, the Mind, and Sentiments. Theſe are fixed, and as their

their Form is known, the Way to arrive at them is open; and they are honourable, for they are, when of the nobler Kind, Virtue. When you have accommodated yourſelf to the Temper of your Huſband, you will ſoon arrive at thinking with him. When you have acquired his Diſpoſition, his Sentiments will follow. I do not ſay that in all Things a wiſe and virtuous Woman is to conform to the Opinion of her Huſband, for he may be fooliſh, or be vicious, and his Love will not laſt if purchaſed on the Terms of copying him in the firſt; nor is even the Love of ſuch an Huſband precious, or is it worth purchaſing at the Price of the latter. But this, my Dear, is not your Caſe. Yet beware. As there may be in the beſt Men ſome Things which, though Trifles, reſemble thoſe in the worſt; the Caution holds with regard to theſe; and if there be any Thing which your own Diſcretion, for I can truſt to it on this head, repreſents to you as amiſs in him, inſtead of imitating it,

propoſe

propoſe in your own Conduct ſome oppoſite Merit, and let that be what he ſhall be moſt tempted to imitate in you. I propoſed, you know, the making advances on both Sides, towards that perfect Similitude I hoped to ſee between you, and this is the Method by which it is beſt to be accompliſhed: While on this Foundation your Love brings you to reſemble one another, you will both become wiſer and better by the Imitation.

After this Caution, which I know your modeſt Opinion of your own good Qualities will teach you to uſe ſparingly, there is nothing that will be ſo much to your Honour, or to your Advantage, as the making yourſelf as like to the Lord of your Wiſhes in Soul and Sentiment, as you will have done in Countenance. I have ventured to preſcribe to you an Acknowledgment of Superiority; and in Conſequence of that, the hard ſounding Virtue of a Wife's Obedience.

dience. All Things will grow eaſy, my Dear, in Practice; the Conduct, which I am at this Time recommending to you, will effect all thoſe without once giving you a Senſe of their Difficulty, or of the natural Reluctance which attends the executing them. To think as you find your Huſband thinks, on the ſeveral Occaſions of Life, is to pay the Acknowledgment of that Superiority which he expects in the higheſt Point, in that which will flatter his ſelf-Love moſt, and that moſt worthily; and will reflect Honour upon him: And it is paying an Obedience without the Name, nay, without the very Character of that Duty. While your Mind is actuated by the ſame Sentiments with his, your Conduct will be what thoſe Sentiments dictate and inſpire, without its ſeeming to be done by Compulſion. Your natural Deportment will be that of Obedience without the Name; and believe me, my Dear, 'tis not the Name they expect, but the Thing. While you follow the

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Dictates of your own Mind, you will be acting perfectly according to his. This is the true Obedience of a Wife; this is the honourable Superiority of an Husband; and what is there mean, or what is there difficult in this? Nothing.

You see that the Duties of a Wife, however disgustful they may seem, are easy and honourable in themselves, and 'tis not possible they should be otherwise, for they are from Nature; and whatever ill-informed Minds or misguided Imaginations may figure to themselves, that which is from Nature is at once convenient and becoming. It serves our Purposes, and it does Honour to our Submission.

Now that I have established this bugbear Doctrine of Obedience to you, on this its true and rational Foundation; when I have told you, and, I will not doubt, convinced you, how necessary, how proper, and how advantageous

advantageous it is; when I have ſaid all that is diſagreeable in it to your Satisfaction; and in this laſt Article reduced its very Eſſence into Conformity of Diſpoſition; and ſhewn you that when you are wiſe, to obey your Huſband, is no more than to purſue the Dictates of your own Reaſon, and act according to your own Inclination; when I have thus taken away, not only the Nature but the very Name of this hard Duty, ſo far as they imply any Thing hard in them, permit me to extend the Bounds of the Thing itſelf, perhaps farther than others have thought of: Deterred by falſe Appearances they have not dared to propoſe the real Subject, and have ſacrificed to them what was eſſential.

Now that I have explained away all that is diſagreeable in the Obedience of a Wife, I ſhall tell you, that there is no one ever expected ſo much of it as I do; and what I have preſcribed to you, my Dear, I have

myſelf

myſelf practiſed. I do aſſure you, there is Pleaſure in the Performance, and it is no little Matter in the Reward. It is not enough that a Wife in all Things does what her Huſband requeſts, that is at the beſt, in the Language of the greateſt Judge in the World, being but an unprofitable Servant. I have recommended to you, my Dear, a Conformity of Mind, Temper and Sentiment; that you may be able to execute all that a Huſband can requeſt, without the making it a matter of Obedience. Is it not better to anticipate than to comply with Requeſt? Is it not more pleaſant as well as more honourable, to do that of your own Inclination which would be a natural Subject of his Command? Purſue the Path I have marked out to you, and this will be the Conſequence; you will acquaint yourſelf with his very Soul: You will reſemble him in all his Sentiments; his Opinions, his Determinations will be all yours; and you will act as he would wiſh without his naming it.

Few

Few Huſbands have the Surlineſs to command a Wife: One of that good Diſpoſition yours is of, will be cautious and tender of requeſting, for fear it ſhould be ſomething diſagreeable to you. How prudent to obviate the Arrogance of the firſt: How happy muſt it be to prevent the Wiſhes of the latter. 'Tis taking from the Hands of Duty that which ſhe would have acquired, and giving it into the Lips of Favour. 'Tis making that a Merit, which in the other Caſe could only have been Compliance.

When you have formed your Temper and your Thoughts, my Dear, upon thoſe of your Huſband, according to the Plan I have laid down, you will find that you have no Will, no Pleaſure, but what is alſo his. This is the Character the Wife of Prudence would be apt to aſſume; ſhe would make herſelf the faithful Mirror, to ſhew, unaltered and without Aggravation, Diminution or Diſtortion, the Thoughts, the Sentiments,

ments, and the Reſolves of her Huſband. She would have no particular Deſign, no Opinion, no Thought, no Paſſion, no Approbation, no Diſlike, but what ſhould be his own reflected Judgment. But this however prudent, would be ſervile alſo: There is a Meanneſs in ſuch a Submiſſion that diſgraces a free Agent; nay, there is a Meanneſs that degrades the rational Creature: Far be it from me, ever to preſcribe that to you which ſhould deface your Reaſon: Heaven gave it for your Guide, and I would have you uſe it ſo. It was made your Diſtinction from all other Creatures; keep up the Prerogative: There are many Ways to the ſame End: You will find, my Dear, that I have adviſed you to the Attainment of the ſame Advantage, by the Uſe of your Reaſon, which this would make the Effect of your ſacrificing it. And you will by this know, that while I propoſe to you all the Duties of the Wife, nay, and propoſe them even in their fulleſt Extent;

I expect

I expect nothing from you in the fulfilling them, that needs to make a reaſonable Creature bluſh, or that even Pride itſelf would wiſh to avoid.

The Wife, on my Principles, ſhould be in all her Thoughts, in all her Actions, the Attendant and true Reſemblance of her Huſband; ſhe ſhould no more depart from him than the Shadow from the Subſtance; nor ſhould ſhe any more than that can be, unlike to him. Let Reaſon be the Sun that gives its Being to this Attendant; and the Purity of the one will as ſurely, as the unaltered Form of the other, make it retain the Lineaments. The Wife who thus in all Things that concern their mutual Welfare, applies to the Huſband, and from him obtains her Motion, Form and Figure, will in all Things be to him what he is to himſelf, a ſecond Body animated by the ſame Soul. Nor let this appear an uneaſy Situation to her. His Approbation is her greateſt

Honour, and 'tis the Source of her moſt laſting Happineſs; this ſhe will aſſuredly acquire from it; and to you, Child, it will not appear difficult. You whom I have convinced, that there is a natural Superiority in your Huſband; will not be averſe to acknowledge it in theſe which are the only Occaſions on which it can demand your Vote in its Favour: You will be happy to have the Load of Thought taken from you, by one who is enabled by Nature and by his Education to think better; and you will be glad of having the Taſk of a Deciſion taken from you, in a Thing wherein it was at once precarious and important. There are, my Dear, theſe Occurrences in the Way of a married Life: There are Occaſions in which you are mutually engaged in the Event of what is doing; and in which both muſt concur to the ſame End, if ever you hope to ſee it brought about. There are not many of theſe, but when they happen they are important: 'Tis in theſe, and it is only in theſe, that the

Wife

Wife has occaſion to exert her private Faculties and Intereſts; and 'tis in theſe that I would have her Judgment ſeem the reflecting Mirror to his Determinations; and her Form the Shadow to his Body; conforming itſelf to his ſeveral Poſitions, and following it in all its Motions.

I except from the Occaſions of this perfect, and uncontroverting Obedience, thoſe Occurrences in which the future Subſiſtence of herſelf, or the Care for an unborn Poſterity may demand her Attention. Yet even in theſe I would not have her own Will contradict him; but the Advice of her beſt Friends and of the wiſeſt Counſellors: In this there is no immediate Step for her to take: All that is required, is to with-hold for the preſent her Obedience; and her Reaſon, as well as her Duty, will inſtruct her to do this in the gentleſt Manner, and to make it appear, not to be her Reluctance, but that of others. In all elſe, believe me,

my deareſt ***, that the moſt perfect and implicit Faith in the Superiority of an Huſband's Judgment, and the moſt abſolute Obedience to his Deſires, is not only the Conduct that will inſure you moſt Succeſs, but will give you moſt Satisfaction. It will take from you a thouſand Cares which could have anſwered no Purpoſe; it will relieve you from a Weight of Thought that would be very painful, and no way profitable, and it will aſſure to you the Eſteem with the Affection of your Huſband. Theſe are the Points at which you will aim; not only as you are good, but as you are prudent; 'tis not only a Virtue to pay Attention to them, but an Act of Intereſt These are the Points I have in all theſe Letters laboured to aſſiſt you in attaining, and ſhall in the few that follow. I have regarded them as they concern Trifles, and as they determine in the moſt important Matters: I have adviſed you to the Methods of attaining them, as well the eaſy as the difficult; and I have

ventured

ventured to recommend, nay, and to preſs upon you in the ſtrongeſt Manner what are eſteemed the moſt diſagreeable Part of a Wife's Duty, ſo far as it has reſpect unto theſe. You know my Motive is Love: You know my Tutor is Experience; and while you have Gratitude and Attention; while you are ſenſible what is your own Good; and believe that what I have ſeen in the World, may give me the Opportunities of aſſiſting you by my Advice, I am certain you will regard it. My Dear, farewel.

* * *.

LETTER XVII.

Of being in public and in private in a Huſband's Company.

I Have recommended to you, my Dear, a general Attention to your Huſband's Temper, and a Conformation to his Sentiments. You will by the firſt inform your-

ſelf of his general Thoughts and Inclinations; and in the laſt, you will fulfil his Pleaſure in them, while you are even purſuing your own. Give me leave, after ſo many general Admonitions, to deſcend to ſome particulars; for this is to bring Knowledge to Practice, and to reduce Theory to Uſe.

You will not ſuppoſe, that by my adviſing you to be as the Shadow to your Huſband's Perſon, in thoſe Things in which you are both naturally and neceſſarily concerned, that I wiſh you to be ſo in all Things: Far otherwiſe. The Importance and the Neceſſity of the Occaſion will warrant it on this: But what is Virtue under theſe Circumſtances, would be Impertinence in others; and tho' it is now a Comfort and a Satisfaction to both, it would be, in Trifles, a ſlaviſh Attendance in the one, and offenſive to the other. It is not enough to know *what* to do, we muſt know *when*

to

to do it. If by recommending it to you to be like the Shadow to your Huſband's Perſon, you ſhould underſtand me literally, or adviſing you never to depart from him, you would turn that into a Trouble, which properly excited, were a Virtue; and would ſacrifice your Peace by an imprudent Uſe of that which prudently obſerved would inſure it.

As this has led me to think of the being with your Huſband, let me take Occaſion to ſpeak upon that Head. 'Tis one of the moſt nice and difficult Parts of the Conduct of a Wife, and there is none on which ſo much of her Peace depends. In this, as in all other Occurrences, make it your firſt Point to conſult what I have laid down as your general Rule. Enquire how much, how often, when, and what Occaſions your Huſband wiſhes that you ſhould be with him; and make that the Rule of being ſo. Nothing is ſo diſtaſteful to a Man of Spirit

as the fond Company of a Wife, and nothing is ſo painful to an affectionate Huſband as her Abſence, when he wiſhes to be with her. Conſider theſe, for all depends on them. The Faſhion of the World has in a Manner baniſhed the Huſband from the Wife's Company in public Places. Don't let your Fondneſs want to break in upon an eſtabliſhed Cuſtom, even tho' it be an ill one; but if he have that Reſolution, receive it with Acknowledgments, ſuch as a Love that ſhews itſelf to be above the ordinary Rate deſerves, and encourage it by the Pleaſure with which you ſhew that you receive it.

When you have Parties for any of the public Places, never invite him to be of them, for it will be a Pain to him to ſay no; nor is it your Intereſt to accuſtom him to Refuſals: But tho' you never aſk him to be with you, I would have you religiouſly obſerve to tell him of them; never omit this,

nor

nor ever diſguiſe the Party. He will by this be always ſure where he ſhall find you if he pleaſe: I doubt not but he will frequent thoſe Places where he knows you are, rather than others: I would have you always expect it; always imagine that he is preſent, and that your Conduct is altogether under his Eye. If he come in alone, let him firſt look about him, and then aſk him to join your Party; 'tis probable he comes with that Intent: It appears, at leaſt, that he ſees no other whom he is diſpoſed to join, and you will at once ſpeak your Affection, and inſure his Pleaſure. If he come in with others, let your Eyes only as you paſs by one another, declare your Joy in ſeeing him. If he ſhould chance to leave his Party, and mix himſelf with yours, be not aſhamed to confeſs your Satisfaction in the Preference he gives you: Let him ſee with what ſuperior Pleaſure a Wife receives him above all other People, and he will pay you a proportioned Regard.

Although

Although nothing can give a Man of Senſe who loves you, a greater Pleaſure than the ſeeing that you prefer his Company to that of all the World, yet nothing is ſo tireſome as the ſoliciting it, when he is not diſpoſed to give it you. The worſt Wife in the World will be agreeable in ſome Degree to her Huſband, if ſhe never forces herſelf upon him, but is in his Way when he is inclined to talk with her; and the beſt in the World will grow tireſome, if ſhe will be the Diſpoſer of his Hours without his Inclination. Men often chuſe to be alone, and they have often Reaſon: Why would you interrupt their neceſſary Thoughts: They have fixed their Minds on Parties that are in themſelves indifferent, which will be very diſagreeable to them to be interrupted; they will now and then be on thoſe Schemes which are whimſical, rather than of any real ill; and why ſhould ſhe, who is not to be a Sufferer by them, make herſelf a Sufferer by the Interruption.

To have your Huſband always pleaſed with your Company, my Dear, the great Secret is to let him have it only when he pleaſes. 'Tis a very eaſy one to practice, and yet who is there attends to it? Believe me, the Peace of Families is oftener ſacrificed to theſe Trifles, than to any real Diſcontent, or real Faults.

As I am an Advocate for the moſt unbounded Liberty on the Man's Part, in regard to his going out, and ſtaying out, you ſhall find that I am not quite unreaſonable as to the Ladies. I am no Friend to that mighty Diſtinction which has been kept up between the Conduct of the Huſband and the Wife on parallel and unimportant Occaſions; and I would have her as little denied thoſe Liberties which are innocent and prudent, as her Huſband. You ſee I am an Advocate for you as well as for him, and when I point you out your Duty, would be as free in ſhewing your Indulgencies. The rigid

Moraliſts

Moraliſts have ſaid, the good Wife ſhould be like the Tortoiſe, ſlow in her Motions, and careful of her Habitation: The Emblematical ones have painted her with her feet naked; and thoſe who have penetrated deeper into the Secrets of Nature, in ſearch after Compariſons, have called in the laborious Ant as an inſtance of Propriety. The Male of this Inſect they ſay has Wings, the Female none. Nature therefore they would infer, intended him to be a Rambler, and her to mind the Affairs at Home. And they would transfer the Obligation to Creatures endued with Reaſon. Theſe are pretty Fancies, my Dear, but till we are Mahometans, and are perſuaded that Women have no Souls, I ſhall not be for our taking Example from an Inſect. The Writers of thoſe Times, my Dear, were Men, and they conſulted the Pleaſure of their own Sex alone. I am a female Moraliſt, and while I ſo rigidly point out to you your Duty, I ſhall not be remiſs in telling you what may be your allowable

Pleaſures.

Pleaſures. Thoſe People wrote to the Imagination, I would direct my Thoughts to the Heart: They wrote to Men, I am adviſing one of my own Sex: They knew nothing of the Scenes in which they pretended to inſtruct, I am writing to you of what I experienced. Wonder not, Child, that I take this Pains to convince you of the Truth of what you will naturally be ready to believe: I know your cautious Diſpoſition, and I would have you convinced as well of the Propriety and Innocence of your Pleaſures, as of the Neceſſity of your Duty.

You are not married to a Ruſtic, or an Ignorant; your Huſband knows the Method of Life in which he found you, and as he was not diſpleaſed with you at that Time, he will not now be dis-ſatisfied that you continue it. There are no Pleaſures an unmarried Perſon educated as you have been, could give yourſelf leave to enjoy, which will be improper for his Wife to continue; nor would

would it be a handſome Compliment to him, to let the World, who had been uſed to ſee you partake of them, at this Time perceive that you had let them alone. It would look as if he was averſe to them; and would you have it ſuppoſed that he was a Niggard, or was Jealous! which of theſe Suſpicions would you chuſe! and you may be ſure the World would lay it upon one of them.

You have been accuſtomed to the Oratorio, you may be as often there as ever: The Play-houſe I would have you regulate on the ſame Plan; and be ſeen, at leaſt, at one of the Ridottos. This leads me to a Diverſion, of which I think you have been too fond, but I muſt name it; perhaps I am grown out of Faſhion by my having outlived theſe Diverſions; but whether it be Prejudice or Reaſon, I have always been uneaſy at your going ſo frequently to the Maſquerades. Whether I have been right or not in that Opinion, of this I am ſure, that I have Rea-

ſon

ſon on my Side, when I deſire you not to be ſo fond of them, or ſo frequent, now, in your Viſits to them.

You miſtake greatly, if you think me ſo very an old Woman, as to ſuppoſe that Things abſolutely ill happen frequently at theſe Places. I know upon what I ground my Caution to you, and I know that it has Reaſon. Altho' there were no Harm, nor any Advance toward Harm, at theſe Places, the greater Part of the World has an Opinion that there is; and this, my Dear, is enough to make a prudent Woman avoid them: But there is a great deal more: For tho' no real ill may happen there, the World you know is not eaſily perſuaded, that the boldeſt of all advances toward it are not made there. I know they are. I have not lived among the gay World ſo long, without hearing thoſe Things in Converſation which I have never given myſelf Opportunities to be otherwiſe acquainted with. I have trem-

bled

bled to hear the Deſigns which have been laid for making the worſt Uſe of theſe Places. I have heard of an Addreſs to the Maſque, which he who made it, dared not have ſpoken to the naked Face; and I know what there is againſt the Woman who will give herſelf leave to hear.

I am ſorry to confeſs what you know, my Dear, too well already, that all Women are fond of Flattery; they love it even while they know it to be ſo; and if they have no Opinion of the Sincerity of the Perſon from whom they receive it, ſtill they do him Credit for his Complaiſance. The Ear of every Woman is open this Way to the Inſinuation of the artful: Nay, I ſhall go farther, every Woman loves to be courted: Tho' ſhe deſpiſe the Lover, and deteſt his Intentions, ſtill there is a Pleaſure in being ſolicited and treated as a Divinity. Let the Woman who has not found it ſo, condemn me for ſlandering my Sex. Remember,

that

that a Maſquerade is the Place of all others moſt favourable for this ſort of Folly; and remember, that tho' a Lady's Virtue is in no Danger, her Reputation may ſuffer irreparably from it. A Maſquerade, is the only Place where a Man has an Opportunity of entertaining a Woman alone. 'Tis almoſt the only Place in which a Man, who is an abſolute Stranger, can ſpeak to you. The Cuſtom of the World allows a Liberty in the Diſcourſe there, that could not be permitted any where elſe in the World: There is an Air of great Pleaſantry, and great Security, in ſaying the moſt tender and the boldeſt Things between Jeſt and Earneſt; and he will ſtop at nothing whoſe Inſolence you encourage, while you ſuffer it, and whoſe Preſumption is nothing, while in a Moment he can turn it all to Raillery; and as ſoon as he finds he cannot ſucceed, pretend that he never deſigned it.

The Woman who is maſked, under the

Pretence of being between known and unknown, will bear a thouſand Things, which if ſhe was under a Neceſſity of confeſſing who ſhe was, ſhe could not; and the aſſiſtance of this to the Liberty which he takes, who pretends to be between Jeſt and Earneſt, gives Opportunities to Things the moſt intolerable.

What Woman of Prudence, then, would throw herſelf into the Way of every Man who may have been pleaſed with her Perſon, and who has a Mind to attempt her Virtue, under Conditions in which the very Nature of the Attack takes off the Power of reſenting it, as you otherwiſe, I am well aſſured, would reſent it. To what Purpoſe would you bear the Flattery of Perſons who are to continue indifferent to you. When I write my Dear, to you, I know this is all the Danger there is any need to warn you of, but it would not be ſo with all Women. The Men who have the Aſſurance to make

theſe

theſe Attacks, are generally thoſe who have a Figure, a Rank, or an Addreſs to recommend them; and this begets an Acquaintance, which could not otherwiſe have been begun, and which may be fatal in its Conſequences. The Man who has taken this Opportunity to ſay all the thouſand Things to her, which he would not have dared to whiſper otherwiſe, is often in her Way afterwards; at leaſt, ſhe ſees an agreeable Man who ſhe is ſenſible thinks favourably of her; and he is leſs indifferent to her than other People. If he have that Aſſurance, which may be well expected to attend the other, he comes up to her the next Time he ſees her, and claims the Merit of his Acquaintance: He ſwears to the ſerious Meaning of all that he pretended was Raillery; and ſhe is drawn in to liſten to the full recital of that which it is by no Means proper ſhe ſhould have heard at all; and which ſhe otherwiſe never would have heard, no, not in a Whiſper. I know not what

the Conſequences may be, and I tremble to think of them.

But this is not all. This is a Danger to which you would not be expoſed, becauſe 'tis a Language you would not hear: But, beſide the Men of Intrigue, there are Coxcombs in the World; and theſe will be as fatal to your Reputation, as the others to the Virtue of thoſe who are leſs guarded in their Tempers. You will not pretend that one of this Stamp cannot have an Opportunity of talking to you at a Maſquerade, a Place where you know not who it is that talks to you. He will aſſume the Air of a familiar Acquaintance; and how can you know, under the Habit, that he is not ſuch: He will get from ſome one of your Acquaintance, ſome Piece of ſecret and unmeaning Intelligence; 'tis the Cant of the Place, and People are as ready to give as to aſk it, that they may have the Diverſion of perplexing thoſe they know. He gets your

Ear

Ear by this, and he ſays nothing to offend you. The moſt trifling Thing that can be ſpoken he delivers with all the Caution and Complaiſance of a Thing of Importance; you are teiſed with his Impertinence, and yet ſeeming an Acquaintance, you do not affront him or ſhake him off. You have done yourſelf irreparable Injury. Theſe are a ſett of People who wiſh or deſire nothing more than to have the honour of being ſeen with you. As the Rake attempts your Virtue, theſe attack your Reputation only; and it is loſt not becauſe you are unwilling to defend it, but becauſe you are inſenſible of the Danger.

You may be aſſured, your Perſon occaſions your being talked of among thoſe who know a good Perſon only, as an Object of Deſire, and tho' they cannot get at you for an Attempt, or would not dare to make it if they could, yet they will talk in this ſort of Strain. They'll tell the Fop, who has

been entertaining you, that he is a happy Fellow, and he'll not contradict them. His own Vanity will not ſuffer him to give up ſuch a Title to their Envy. He affects to have been courting you, and he believes he ſhall ſucceed, but it requires Time—You People of Faſhion are ſubjected to ſo many Forms: Huſbands are ſuch troubleſome People: And Women of any Degree of Merit ſet ſuch a Value upon themſelves, that he knows not when he ſhall bring it about.

This is the Language of that inſolent ſet of Fools: Wretches, who without the ſpirit of even daring to be wicked, will produce all the Effects of Crimes in others, and altho' they never inſnare or attempt the Innocence of a Chambermaid, will deſtroy the Character of a Ducheſs. Thus, my Dear, you will be ſpoken to, for all the Prudence in the World cannot prevent it; and in conſequence of being thus ſpoken to, you will be

be thus ſpoken of. While you have not been affronted with the leaſt Attempt, your Huſband will be told of your having a Lover. Theſe Things are ſo little Secrets, that he will probably enough hear of the Expectations of your imaginary Gallant, as well as his Deſigns: and will he ſuppoſe that you know nothing of the Matter? 'Tis lucky for you if he have this Diſcernment; but if it ſhould be otherwiſe, what have you ſacrificed, and to what have you ſacrificed it?

I mention this Conſequence of frequenting Maſquerades to you, my Dear, as one that is unavoidable. Were I writing to a Woman of leſs virtuous Sentiments, or of leſs Diſcretion, I ſhould ſay a great deal more; but to you 'tis needleſs: Groſſer Faults cannot come into your Way, becauſe the Occaſions of them would be avoided. By putting it at this, you will find ſufficient Reaſon in my ſpeaking leſs favourably of

theſe Diverſions than you think of them; or ſhall I ſay, than you have been uſed to think of them. After all I do not mean that it is neceſſary you ſhould entirely debar yourſelf from them. I am not ſo rigid as to ſuppoſe a married Woman ſhould be abſolutely denied them; but I would have them looked upon at moſt, as Matters of great Indifference. One in the Seaſon is abundantly ſufficient; and take your Huſband with you. I don't mean that you ſhould join him to you for the Evening; for that would be diſagreeable to him at ſuch a Place. Only let the World ſee, let him ſee, and do you yourſelf remember that you are under his Eye, and that your Conduct cannot eaſily appear in a wrong Light to him, unleſs it be in itſelf blameable.

I have named to you, my Dear, the principal of the public Places, indeed almoſt the only I would wiſh you to be at: I cannot be fond of the ſummer Evenings at

Ranelagh

Ranelagh or at *Vauxhall:* There is ſomething unnatural and mean in People of Virtue and Decency mixing with the Herd of common Proſtitutes, and abandoned Rakes, who are ſeen barefaced there, and even make you the Confidants of their Appointments. But you will be in the Country a good deal in the Time of theſe, and it is happy to be out of the Way of them. As to the Extravagancies of Fancy with which People are ſometimes entertained in the Town Seaſon, I do not think it is to a Woman of Faſhion's Credit to be ſeen to countenance them. It cannot be worth while to ſit an Evening to ſee Dogs dance; and in a Morning if one Comedian mimicks the reſt, you ſhould conſider that they are all beneath your Notice. 'Tis much more to your Credit, as well as your Advantage, to be ſettling your Accounts and regulating your Family: Theſe are Diverſions for Men: Indeed, if I have been rightly informed who the Women are that moſt frequent them, their

Appearance

Appearance is the beſt of all Reaſons for your Abſence. As to Viſits I have mentioned that Part of your Conduct already, and you have convinced me, by your Practice, that you are of my Opinion. The Park I think an agreeable and a healthful Walk for an Hour at Noon; but I would not have you always ſeen there. If I am inclined to be very much againſt a ſingle Woman's making her Face too common, I am yet more againſt it when ſhe is married. There is I think but one Rendezvous which I have not named, and that I ſhall name with the greateſt of all Diſapprobation: Auctions. The *India Houſes* were at one Time, the great Places of loitering away a Morning, but the cheapening Fans and buying Screens, was not found to be all that the virtuous Ladies meant by frequenting them. They became infamous, becauſe it was diſcovered that Men were met there; and tho' this did not happen to one Woman in a thouſand by Appointment, all the reſt ſhared the Cenſure.

Cenſure. There are Toy-Shops in *London* which I ſhould adviſe you againſt viſiting, as ſtrictly as if the *India* Houſes were revived among us, and for the ſame Reaſon: But I need not name them to you, they are ſufficiently particular. What theſe do for a few, the Auctions do for all the Town; and 'tis not ſo barefaced, the very Chairmen ſee it at the other Places. You will ſee why I requeſt it of you to avoid them; and you will allow that I have Reaſon: It would be impoſſible to advance one Argument in Favour of your going to them. They are injurious to Trade, and therefore 'tis not fit they ſhould be encouraged: They are known Places of Deceit to the unwary, and you cannot be upon your Guard againſt them. Your Huſband will beſt inform you where and how it is proper to buy; and you are not to go to theſe Places to find out what you did not know that you wanted. Were there no Reaſon againſt them, but the Money that is ſquandered away, it were ſufficient,

ficient, but this is the leaſt. 'Tis certain that ill Women frequent them, to meet thoſe whom they cannot, with Decency, or with Prudence, ſee at their own Houſes. You, my Dear, will not ever wiſh to ſee ſuch Perſons any where; but you will be among the Innocent, who incur the Cenſure, if you are found where others do it. You will remember, that while you was unmarried, I uſed to repeat to you the Names of *Park-Walker* and *Auction-Hunter*, with great Diſapprobation: Be aſſured, there are yet more Reaſons againſt your being too conſtant at the one, or ever being at the other now, than there were then. They might then have prevented your being happy, but they may now make you miſerable. You will ſee, my Dear, I have in this Reſpect, as in all others, endeavoured to point you out a Medium for your Conduct. 'Tis beſt in all Reſpects, but of all it is moſt ſo with regard to the Conduct of a married Life. I would neither have you made an

Ant

Ant or a Tortoiſe, with the antient Moraliſts; nor would I have you be a Fly, according to the Practice of the modern Libertines. Be not wholly confined to the Houſe, for your Huſband's Honour; nor be eternally Abroad, for your own. I have always told you, that the Woman of Reaſon will prefer a few ſelect Friends to a Multitude of common Acquaintance. Make a great Difference, my Dear, between your friendly Calls and your Viſits of Form; avoid Routs, and let your Favourites of your own Sex be older than yourſelf. There is a Pride in giving Protection, but 'tis more prudent to receive it.

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LETTER XVIII.

On the Management of Converſation.

YOU ſee, my Dear, that I have not only indulged you in the Thought of having ſome female Acquaintance with whom to be often

often, and upon a Footing of the greateſt Intimacy. You will know from a Reaſon I gave you, in one of the firſt Letters, how eligible Perſons of this Sex older than yourſelf, are in Compariſon of the younger; but I here meant it on another Account, as they would be more experienced.

I have always ſpoken againſt Cards, and I think it no trifling Circumſtance in your Favour that you are naturally not inclined to them. You will know, that when I mentioned a certain Kind of People, as the moſt proper for your Familiarity, I had my Eye upon ſome particular Perſons: You will not be ſlow to conceive whom I mean; and you will not like thoſe whoſe good Qualities would make you approve them, the leſs becauſe they are your Relations. They have the Prudence to deteſt Cards as much as you do; and conſequently very many of your Evenings, will be ſpent in their Company, in a manner that becomes

rational

rational Creatures, in Converſation. Nothing appears ſo eaſy as a proper Management of this, but nothing is ſo difficult: I don't mean that it is not eaſy to make it agreeable to you, but 'tis more worth your while to conſider how you ſhall make it advantageous. Pray receive my Opinions on this Head with Candour.

It is eaſy to talk, and it is agreeable to do it. Few indeed are qualified for it; but very few are cautious of any Deficiency in that Reſpect. 'Tis for this Reaſon that ten People are deſpicable in Company for one that is thought of favourably; and what is worſe, the People moſt qualified to ſpeak, are for this Reaſon, and by this Means kept ſilent. Pray, my Dear, underſtand Converſation as it was meant to be, not as a mere ſource of Laughter; for tho' I am no Enemy to Mirth, I cannot allow it to uſurp the Place of Wiſdom, but for Improvement: Thoſe who converſe together with Freedom

and

and Candour, communicate to one another all the Advantages of their ſeveral Experience, and each is aſſiſted by the Life of the other. You will hear me very often, my Dear, uſing the Words Experience and Inexperience, in the Place of thoſe of Wiſdom and Folly: And they are very much the ſame Thing. I am about to tell you, that it is for the common Advantage of a Company to let the wiſeſt Perſon ſpeak moſt: But when I addreſs that Obſervation to you, I ſhall change the Phraſe, and ſay the moſt experienced. To ſpeak with great Sincerity, I do not know a Perſon of better Underſtanding than yourſelf; yet the Advantages of Experience will give to every one of theſe, whom I promiſe myſelf I ſhall continue to ſee your favourite Companions, an Opportunity of judging better than you can, and conſequently of inſtructing you in a thouſand Things. I do not mean by this, that they will be forcing their Advice upon you, or attempting to dictate to you in your

Affairs

Affairs. This would be Impertinence of which they cannot be guilty; and it would be a Meanneſs to ſuffer it, and therefore I know you will not. What I mean by this, is, that their Converſation will be inſtructive to you: You will hear their Opinions of the Occurrences of the World that offer for Converſation, and you will learn to form your own Judgments properly by the Effect of their Experience.

'Tis in this Manner that I flatter myſelf I ſhall ſee their Wiſdom, my dear Child, uſeful to you; and to render it ſo in the greateſt Degree, let me remind you of applying to the preſent Purpoſe what I have mentioned generally with regard to Converſation. I do not ſay that any one of theſe has a better Underſtanding than you, probably not one knew ſo much as you do at your Age, or could have judged ſo well, but now they have Experience. You will underſtand, that altho' it be a Pleaſure to hear yourſelf ſpeak,

it is an Advantage to hear them, and conſequently you will have the Prudence often to give the Preference where it is due. I would not have you ſilent, my Dear, nay, when Trifles are the Subject, talk as much as any of them, but diſtinguiſh when the Diſcourſe turns upon Things of Importance, and then know you will be improved by hearing.

What I have recommended as your beſt Conduct, with regard to your Friends and Acquaintance, I ſhall alſo apply with regard to your Huſband. A Medium between too much Silence, and an eternal Prattling; and more than all, a Prudence to diſtinguiſh when it is Time for the one, and when for the other. Your Huſband, my Dear, is young, he is himſelf ſprightly; and all your Sprightlineſs, unleſs it be ill-timed, will pleaſe him; he loves you, and therefore he will be pleaſed even with your Follies: But know when 'tis proper to give a Looſe to them.

them. You are in this Reſpect not only to diſtinguiſh when you ſhould ſpeak, and when 'tis better to be ſilent, but alſo what you are to ſpeak, or of what kind. I would have you look upon your Huſband, as upon your older female Acquaintance, as a Perſon capable of inſtructing you. Altho' he is not much older than yourſelf, yet as a Man he muſt have ſeen more of the World than you can, who are a Woman, and conſequently, in all Caſes, he will be better able to judge. Beſide, what in the other Caſe was only Reſpect, becomes here a Duty. You owe to him your Obedience, and the Title of a Superior, and therefore alſo you are to attend to him. I have ſeen thoſe Women, (and they are not unhappy ones neither, altho' the World has thought ſo) who, tho' full of talk in the Abſence of their Huſband, have been always reſerved and mute in his Preſence: 'Tis from this ſingle Circumſtance the World have thought them unhappy. Such a Silence ſtamps upon him the Charac-

ter of a Churl or a Tyrant; and upon yourſelf that of a Slave. 'Tis well to have a diſintereſted, and unprejudiced, and a friendly Judge of one's Conduct: There is nothing an ingenuous Mind can deſire ſo much, becauſe it gives an Opportunity of ſtrengthening what is right, and remedying what is amiſs in it; and who is ſo proper for that diſintereſted and friendly Office as a Huſband? Inſtead of a Reſerve in his Preſence, aſſume an Air of Freedom. Let People ſee you are pleaſed at his coming in, and give yourſelf Liberty of more Converſation. He will tell you at Home if you ſpoke too much, or if you ſpoke improperly; and he will tell you truly. Your Reputation is in a great Degree his own, and therefore you may believe him: But he will name theſe Things ſo tenderly, that you will ſee your Faults in a too favourable Light, if you do not underſtand him as hinting to you what your own Thoughts muſt purſue, rather than as ſpeaking plainly. I think you happy, my Dear,

and

and I would fain have you continue ſo. It would be terrible, while ſo many Wives are made unhappy by the ill Qualities of their Huſbands, you ſhould meet with the ſame Fate from the good ones of yours; and I do aſſure you there is Danger. I can ſee that you are young enough to want a Monitor, and I can ſee that he has too much Tenderneſs to do the Office roundly. Expect not to hear him tell you of your Faults, for you have ſcarce any Thing that can deſerve ſo harſh a Name, nor if you had, has he Severity of Temper to do it with Roughneſs. You muſt know that all you will meet with from him will be the gentleſt Caution; but then you are to know it, as your Duty and your Intereſt, to pay that an Attention of the ſtricteſt Kind. If he thinks you carried this Point too far, be aſſured you were extravagant; if he aſks you whether you do not think you was wrong in ſome other Article, be aſſured that you was, and avoid it afterwards; you will charm him by the Obſer-

vance you pay to his Admonitions, and by the Regard you ſhew theſe little Hints, you will enſure yourſelf from any Thing more unwelcome.

* * *

LETTER XIX.

Of the Management of a Family.

I Have led you by the Hand, my Dear, from the moſt eaſy to the moſt ſeemingly difficult Parts of the Duty of a Wife. I have brought you from the moſt trivial to the moſt important; and I would aſk you, do not theſe, which at firſt ſeemed unpleaſant, become eaſy and deſirable, as they are better underſtood? I know you will confeſs they do. In the ſame Manner, the moſt ſlight acquire a new Degree of Weight in the Examination, and the moſt important ſhew you more of their Neceſſity; this is the Uſe of Conſideration, and this you will always find the Fruit of it.

I have

I have poſtponed to the latter Part of my Advice to you, that Concern which is the moſt eſſential and the moſt weighty of all; and I have done it deſignedly, that being firſt perfectly informed from Reaſon, and not impoſed upon by Imagination, with regard to the others, you may enter upon this with a due Senſe of the Manner in which you are to fulfil it, as well as with a Reſolution of doing ſo.

You will underſtand, my Dear, that I am about to mention to you now the Oeconomy of your Family. 'Tis of the moſt certain Importance, and it cannot be introduced with too much Caution, or preſſed upon you with more than the requiſite Earneſtneſs. Not only your Intereſt is concerned in this, but your Credit. There is no Occaſion of ſo much Reputation to a Woman, be her Condition what it will, ſo great as the ſaying—that her Family is regular and well governed: And let me add, that there is no

Fortune ſo moderate that will not ſerve to make an Appearance, and a good one, on ſuch Foundation; nor is there any ſo great that it will ſupport its juſt Appearance long without it. The peculiar Inſtructions on ſuch an Head as this can only be ſuited to the peculiar Circumſtances of the Perſons to whom they are addreſſed; nay, and the Caution is more ſtrict only to thoſe Peculiarities of Temper and Diſpoſition, under which both are to enjoy thoſe Circumſtances; but altho' on this Conſideration I am not able, my Dear, to give Advice, even to you who are ſo near, and whoſe Affairs are ſo much known to me, yet there are many general Hints which I can lay before you, and which you will every Day find Occaſions of bringing into Practice. In the firſt Place, I believe you need not be told that in order to be happy, it is neceſſary firſt to be eaſy; and be aſſured, that thoſe who are not eaſy at Home, will never taſte Enjoyment any where elſe. To be eaſy is to be regular.

Set

Set out with a Principle of never neglecting any Thing at the Time when it is proper to conſider it; and you will never be perplexed and prevented with the Multiplicity of Concerns. Theſe Things offer ſingly, and they are eaſily diſpatched. 'Tis the neglecting them that accumulates them; and while you look on a confuſed Number, without knowing which to begin with, you let alone all.

Nothing is ſo common, as for People to be plundered by their Servants, and they are the more liable to it, as their Fortunes are the greater. Of all Things that are eaſy to be gone through at firſt, Accounts of this Kind are the eaſieſt; of all others, when they are neglected, they become the moſt confuſed, diſpleaſing and impracticable. You recollect the Circumſtances when a Thing is recent, but you forget them after the Time is elapſed. You expect the Expence of a few Days in Articles that you remember;

remember; you are aſtoniſhed at the Sum when you have forgot the Things that it concerns: But this is not all: Your Servants will ſoon perceive, whether you inſpect their Accounts, and whether you do it regularly; they will know all the Profit that may be made of your Forgetfulneſs, and they will not part with any Portion of the Advantage. I do not pretend to ſay, that all the Care in the World can prevent them from impoſing on you, I fear, almoſt all do it; but that's a Trifle only which you can ſuffer by it, while you take the Caution of examining them often, and they ſee you do it carefully, compared with what they will attempt and will ſucceed in, if they ſee you are remiſs.

The proper Management of them in their ſeveral Parts of Duty, is not of half ſo much Conſequence as this, and yet many pride themſelves upon it, and think they have done great Things, when they have in that Point

regulated

regulated their Family. 'Tis true, that this carries its more immediate Reward: The World's Eye is open to it, and it has their Applauſe; but the other, tho' it concerns only yourſelf, concerns you much more nearly, and you will be unhappy in every other Incident of Life merely from a Neglect in it.

What makes a Remiſſneſs in this Article the more unpardonable, is, that there is nothing ſo eaſy. There require Parts and Talents in many Scenes of Life, which when they are ſettled by their Influence are not of great Importance: But this is in the Power of every one; and yet almoſt all neglect it. How do you ſuppoſe it is, my Dear, that among the Men, thoſe of the weakeſt Parts, become rich often ſooner than the wiſeſt? The Leſſon you will learn from them is not more familiar than uſeful: It is, that Care will go farther than Genius or Abilities. And be aſſured, that for one Eſtate, as we commonly

commonly ſay, that is *got*, among the Men of Buſineſs, there are ten *ſaved*; and 'tis the ſame Thing among the People of Fortune and of no Profeſſion: A Thouſand are ruined by Careleſſneſs, for one that ſuffers by abſolute Extravagance. Attend to this, my Dear, 'tis not the leſs true becauſe little perceived, nor the leſs important becauſe ſeen leaſt by thoſe who have moſt Concern in it. I have told you, my Dear, that 'tis only confuſed when 'tis neglected; and let me add, that there is ſuch a Thing as Method and Order, which will render even Things in their Nature diſagreeable, eaſy and pleaſant.

It is reported of the great Regent of *France* (and it has been quoted by many writers) that being aſk'd how it was poſſible for him to go through ſuch a Multiplicity of Buſineſs? He anſwered, "By doing one Thing at a Time." The Anſwer is greatly to his Honour; but that's a Trifle, it may

be

be made of great Uſe to every Body. If he could tranſact the Affairs of a mighty Kingdom, and at the ſame Time be devoted, for ſo he was, more than almoſt all Men to his Pleaſures; it cannot be difficult for you to regulate the Oeconomy of a little Family with the ſame Degree of Order, without interrupting the Courſe of your ordinary Amuſements. When I ſay, the Care of your Family will not encroach upon your Pleaſures, I ſpeak much leſs than I mean; it will prove to you itſelf a Pleaſure, and one of the greateſt.

There is nothing ſo tireſome, ſo vexatious, or ſo impertinent as Buſineſs, when it breaks in upon People at improper Times; but on the contrary, there is nothing ſo agreeable when it is attended to at the proper Seaſons. You have heard of the Pleaſure the Men who have been bred to Buſineſs take in it, even after they have no longer Occaſion to practice it: You have heard of thoſe who

when

when they had retired from the Town, full of the Advantages of Trade, have found themſelves unhappy even in the Want of its Buſtle. Employment, my Dear, far from being in its Nature diſagreeable to the human Mind, is pleaſing; and it not only gives Pleaſure in the Moments devoted to it, but it gives a Reliſh for thoſe which ſucceed.

Let me, my deareſt ***, make you in Love with Buſineſs: It will need only to make you acquainted with it truly to bring this about. 'Tis of great Importance to your Happineſs; and be aſſured, there is no ſuch Thing as enjoying any Part of your Life truly and thoroughly without it. There are a thouſand little Things which you cannot expect an Huſband to attend to, they are indeed unworthy of his Attention; and it would look mean in him to buſy himſelf about them. Theſe all concern the Affairs of your Family, and theſe belong to you. Leave to him the Care of his Eſtate,

do you take that of the Houſe: Let him manage the Tenants; do you take Order about the Servants: They are two quite different Provinces; and you will each execute your own beſt, by neglecting the other wholly.

There is nothing, my Dear, that will procure you the Eſteem of your Huſband equally with this; and being already ſecure of his Affection, it is this at which you are to aim. He will know this as a moſt neceſſary Article in the Oeconomy of his Affairs: He will know it does not by any Means become him to attend to it himſelf, in as much as it is almoſt a Diſcredit to him to look into it. He will wiſh that you, to whom it properly belongs, would take the Care of it: But perhaps he will be tender in naming it to you, leſt it ſhould appear a Hardſhip. How happy will he then be to find you of yourſelf readily undertaking it and perfectly performing it. He will be

happy

happy that the neceſſary Regard is paid to theſe Concerns; and while he is ſo, he will be doubly pleaſed, becauſe 'tis you who do it. Even if it were troubleſome, this Conſideration ought to recommend it to you, but it is not ſo. I know in the Proſpect it has ſuch an Appearance, but in the Undertaking it is otherwiſe.

There is no Indulgence ſo great as the neglecting one's Duty. I am ſorry to confeſs that this is a Truth, but it is ſo, and I deſpiſe Diſſimulation; but there is alſo a Conſideration on the other Side. Altho' there is no Indulgence equal to the neglecting our Duty, there is no Pleaſure comparable to the Thought of having performed it. We all know what is right, and when we give ourſelves moſt Liberty in doing that which is wrong, we condemn it. Nay, 'tis not limited to the Moment of the Deciſion, either in the Praiſe or in the Cenſure: There is a continual Uneaſineſs attending on the Omiſſion;

Omiſſion; and one is diſpleaſed with one's ſelf for having been guilty of it. 'Tis a diſagreeable Thought that comes acroſs all our Pleaſures, and gives us an Anxiety for the Day; nay, it would laſt longer, did not the freſher Condemnation of the ſucceeding Morning ſuperſede it. On the contrary, there is no Perſon in whatſoever Station, be it ever ſo high, or ever ſo low, who is not conſcious of ſomething as a Duty; and there is none who does not enjoy a Tranquility of Mind, which is not only Pleaſure in itſelf, but gives a Taſte of Pleaſure to every Thing elſe in the Remembrance of having performed it. My Dear, this Care of your Family, and its Concerns, is the Object that will appear to you in the Light of this Duty. You will taſte no Pleaſure on the Day in which you have neglected it; that will be an Uneaſineſs in the Remembrance of this Omiſſion; and the Neceſſity of its being yet at ſome Time to be done, will embitter every Thing: 'Twill appear infinitely more trou-

bleſome in the Proſpect than it would have been found in the Reality; and in proportion to the Senſe you would have of this, will be your Taſte of the Satisfaction.

You will throw yourſelf into your Chair with a happy Unconcern on the Morning when you have done it. It will appear indifferent to you what becomes of the reſt of the Day, now you have performed all that was neceſſary to do in it; and you will at the ſame Time, that you are above the Reach of its Cares, be open to all its Satisfactions. Theſe cannot be taſted, even the greateſt of them, without that Tranquility which is only to be obtained from this Source, and this ennobles even the leaſt of them.

Let me dwell on this Subject: Let me repeat to you my Admonitions, my Cautions, and thoſe Promiſes which I aſſure you will be all made good to you. There were at one Time Diverſions even for the Morning;

Hours

Hours that ought to be employed by every prudent Perſon to a better Purpoſe: But they are at an End; this is perhaps the only Kingdom in the World in which there were public Entertainments ſuffered, at a Time when it was impoſſible any ſhould attend them, without great Neglect of their Affairs; but the Legiſlature have ſeen the Impropriety of ſuffering them, and they have prevented them. I remember the People who were ambitious to be thought Perſons of Taſte, flocking to ſee a Buffoon in the *Haymarket*. 'Twas accounted an Imputation upon their Underſtandings not to have been there. I have ſeen every Creature that had a right to the Denomination of Faſhion, crowd to breakfaſt at Ranelagh: Nay, ſo far was it going, that *Vauxhall* and *Marybone* were following the Example; and on thoſe Days of the Week when they were open, you could hardly buy a Gown, or give orders for a Cap, the whole Legion of Trades-people being the e.

I don't produce theſe People to you as Examples, but as Warnings; you will know their neceſſary Affairs of Life muſt be all neglected for this; and if theſe could not reſtrain them; remember that there is ſome Danger to you, whoſe immediate Maintenance does not depend upon your Application, that you may fall into the ſame idle Faults. I give you ſuch Inſtances to ſhew you the Degree of the Danger.

I think the Temptation now is only from the Faſhion of Morning Viſits: And do not ſuppoſe I am about to warn you againſt theſe; on the contrary, I am inclin'd to recommend them to you; for if Converſation be the Intent of viſiting, 'tis in theſe, indeed, that you muſt look for it, for Cards take up the Evening: But, my Dear, Cards take up the Night too, at leaſt ſo much of it, that theſe which are called Morning Appointments, are really paid in the Afternoon; and you who not waſting the Night

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in Folly, will find it unneceſſary to paſs the real Morning in Sleep, will have ſufficient Time to make all the Uſe I recommend of it, and to do all this afterwards. About an Hour in a Day is as much as you will need to employ in the neceſſary Care of your Family, provided it be every Day employed. If you neglect to Day, Tomorrow's Buſineſs will be tedious; but taking for each only its own Portion, this little Allotment will ſuffice, and will perform it perfectly. There will be no Portion of your Time, ſo wiſely or ſo well ſpent, none that will give your Huſband ſo much Pleaſure; and when you have thus not only aſſured yourſelf that all is well at Home, but that you have made it ſo, you will go out with a Satisfaction unknown to all but thoſe who have found the ſame Road to it: You will look with Pity (for that Turn your tender Diſpoſition will give it, though it might juſtify Contempt) upon thoſe unhappy, unwiſe People, whom you viſit: And whom as you trip in with all the

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chearful Eaſe and healthy Spirit that attends on Sobriety and Virtue, you ſee ſtretching their almoſt uſeleſs Limbs upon a Couch, or pulling open thoſe Eyes that beheld the Morning Light before they cloſed. If this be a Conſideration that will afford you Pleaſure; for there is a Pleaſure, and 'tis an innocent if it be not a good-natured Pleaſure, in meaſuring our own Happineſs by the Unhappineſs of others: What will be the Satisfaction with which you will look upon your own Conduct in the Sequel. With what Tranſport will you ſee the Advantages of your own natural Spirits, and eaſy Circumſtances, when you ſee them ready to die with Fatigue and Diſcontent; and almoſt willing to die with Deſpair; when you hear them complain of Loſſes they are unable to pay, and when you ſee the Dread under which they conceal ſuch painful Conſiderations, on the Approach of him who ought to be their Comfort under all Misfortunes?

You ſee, my deareſt ***, (for 'tis with that I would conclude) how one Good attends upon another in the married State, and how one Miſchief, in the ſame Manner, follows upon another's Heels, when the Occaſions of that Good are neglected. You ſee how the Extravagance of the Night at once diſcompoſes and incapacitates for the Oeconomy and Buſineſs of the Morning; and altho' you do not ſee it, let me aſſure you that the contrary is as certain; and that there is no Admonition ſo powerful againſt the Extravagance of the Evening as the Care of Affairs in the Morning. But this to you is a Caution that I know will never be neceſſary. Look into the reſt of the Difference between you, who are and whom Heaven ſend I may always find an unfaſhionable Creature in this Reſpect, and theſe People, as they will call themſelves of Taſte, whom you viſit. You wiſh to preſerve the Affection of your Huſband; and you take the Method by which 'tis to be done. Look on

yourſelf

yourſelf and look on theſe. Are languid Looks, pale Countenances, mad Faces full of Care, the Way to have it? No, you who have Health, and Eaſe, and Tranquility in yours, wear all that can be lovely and engaging. You ſee theſe People of all Things dreading moſt to let the Partners of their Hearts into their Secrets; and of all Secrets concealing the moſt carefully thoſe which give them Pain. With what a Triumph muſt you ſee your own Condition in the Compariſon. You who have Pleaſure in acquainting that neareſt Friend with every Thought your Boſom harbours; you who find in him the moſt ſafe Repoſitory for all your Thoughts, who when there is any Conſideration that gives you Uneaſineſs, fly to him and find Satisfaction in his Advice, and Health in his Condolance.

'Tis thus, my Dear, that Heaven intended thoſe who were married ſhould live with one another; 'tis thus Nature dictates to them

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they ſhould; and Reaſon adds the Authority of her Sanction, and the Weight of all her Arguments to enforce it. You ſee how deſirable a State it is; and while you own it ſuch, 'tis in your Poſſeſſion, and 'tis in your Power to keep it ſo. You have my Advice I think, in every Article in which it can be neceſſary to you. I have been long married, and I have built what I have ſaid to you not only on the Experience thoſe Years have given me in my own Situation, but on what I have ſeen in others.

Remember what depends upon your paying it a due regard; but I know you will do ſo. Pray God bleſs you, Child, and may I ſee you always happy.

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FINIS.

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